



JOHN EVELYN

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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THE CAMEL AND THE NEEDLE'S EYE

THE DECLINE OF ARISTOCRACY

DEMOCRACY AND DIPLOMACY

WARS AND TREATIES

A CONFLICT OF OPINION

RELIGION IN POLITICS

NOW IS THE TIME

FALSEHOOD IN WAR-TIME

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THE PRIORY AND MANOR OF LYNCHMERE AND SHULBREDE

ENGLISH DIARIES

MORE ENGLISH DIARIES

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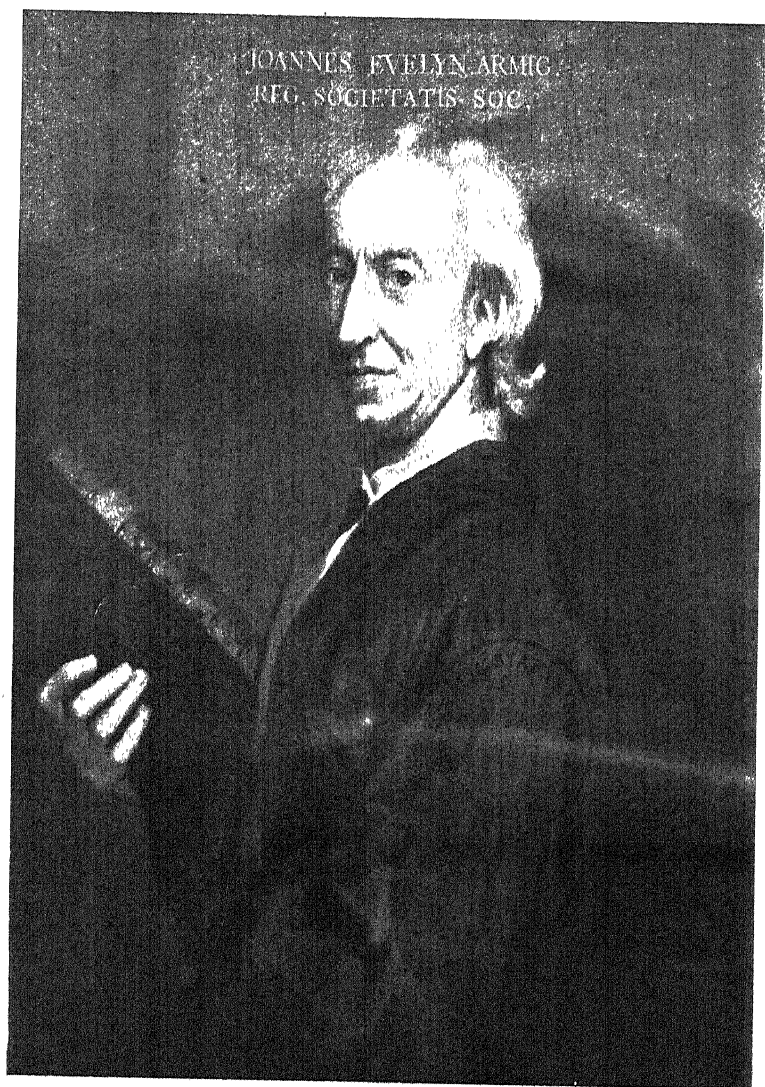
SAMUEL PEPYS (Men of Letters)

QUEEN VICTORIA (Great Lives)

*With Dorothea Ponsonby:*

REBELS AND REFORMERS





JOHN EVELYN

*circa* 1689

From the portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller  
*(by kind permission of the Royal Society)*

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# JOHN EVELYN

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY; AUTHOR OF "SYLVA"

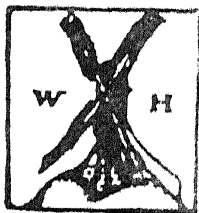
BY

ARTHUR PONSONBY

(LORD PONSONBY OF SHULBREDE)

Reader, do justice to this illustrious character, and be confident that as long as there remains a page of his numerous writings and as long as virtue and science hold their abode in this island his memory will be held in the highest veneration.

*(Dr. A. Hunter in the dedication  
of his edition of "Sylva," 1776.)*



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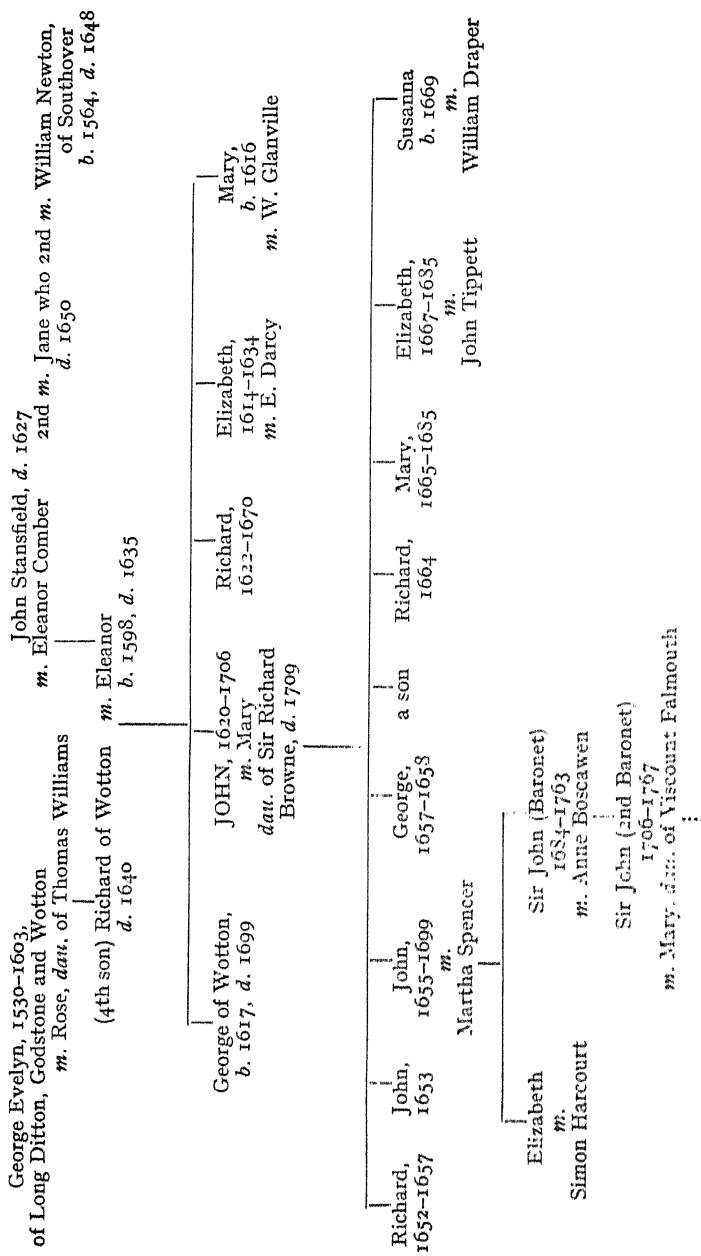
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TO

MY WIFE

AND HER GARDEN





For pedigree of the different branches of the Evelyn family see Wheatley's edition and Austin Dobson's edition of the Diary.



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## P R E F A C E

THIS book is not intended to be a careful map of John Evelyn's life, traced chronologically through the dated entries of his memoirs and supplemented by comments taken from the full notes which have appeared in the successive editions of the *Diary*; nor does it pretend to give any expert estimate of Evelyn's multifarious pursuits and talents, or any exact measure of his accomplishments in science, art and letters. My intention has been rather to present a picture of the man, his interests and his relations with his fellows and his times, co-ordinating material from his letters and his writings as well as from his *Diary* in such a way as to allow him to tell his own story at every stage. By this means readers who may not be attracted by the *Diary* form of writing can be brought to a fuller knowledge of a singularly distinguished figure, whose life had many points of contact with the various movements of his age.

As compared with to-day there was a great restraint in biographical output in former centuries. We are trying to fill in the blanks by picking out men of note of whom, with the aid of research, fuller biographies can be made. Men of action are good subjects because records of their doings can easily be unearthed, and writers and artists are also chosen because of the work they have left behind them.

## P R E F A C E

It is curious that a man who lived till he was eighty-six, with an immense range of acquaintances, left a remarkable Journal, as well as many writings and letters, should have been left out. Introductions to the Journal and works of John Evelyn have up till now been thought to be sufficient, although for the most part they merely consist of brief chronological epitomes of Evelyn's career as given in his Diary. Perhaps he tells his own story so well that further comment has seemed unnecessary. But an objective diary can well be supplemented by correspondence, by works, and by contemporary opinions; and conclusions can be drawn which throw fresh light on so interesting a subject.

No attempt has been made by fresh research to unearth new facts. The existing material is ample. The Diary forms the basis, and the method he adopted in writing it is carefully analysed. His correspondence is far less known, but it serves to amplify and illuminate his opinions and actions, as well as his relationship to his many friends. His books, which with the exception of *Sylva* and one or two pamphlets, are hardly known at all, serve as guides to his mind and character.

I have received help from students of Evelyn literature. Mr. Geoffrey Keynes, who has rendered great service by his editions of hitherto unpublished manuscripts, has taken a sympathetic interest in the production of this book, and helped me by his knowledge of the Wotton papers. Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith has been good enough to read through

## P R E F A C E

the MS.; and for his comments and suggestions, both on points of detail and on general construction, I desire to express my very cordial acknowledgments.

My thanks are also due to Mr. Roger Fulford, who has helped me with the revision of the proofs.

Modern spelling has been used throughout in the quotations; and footnotes and references which seemed superfluous have so far as possible been avoided. Except where other references are given the quoted extracts are from the Diary.

A. P.

Shulbrede Priory,  
Sussex, 1933.



# CHAPTER I

## EARLY YEARS

EVELYN prefaces the more regular entries of his Journal by brief notes on the first twenty years of his life. These can be supplemented by other information, more especially in connection with his mother's family, with whom as a little boy he was brought into intimate contact.

There is no need to enter into the ramifications of the Evelyn pedigree, nor to trace the descent from the fifteenth-century Evelyn of Harrow. We need go no further back than the grandparents. John's grandfather, George Evelyn of Long Ditton, Godstone, and of Wotton, which he purchased in 1579 from Henry Owen, died in 1603. He carried on the manufacture of gunpowder at Long Ditton. George's fourth son, Richard, inherited Wotton, and on the 27th of January, 1613, at St. Thomas's, Southwark, married Eleanor, daughter of John Stansfield of Lewes. They had five children. George the eldest inherited Wotton, John was the second, and Richard the third son. Elizabeth Darcy and Jane Glanville were the two daughters. The vast number of cousins need not be brought into the picture.

We should not get from a careful painting a better portrait of his father than John Evelyn gives in the

opening pages of his record. He was "of a sanguine complexion, mixed with a dash of choler: his hair inclining to light which though exceeding thick became hoary by the time he had attained to thirty years of age; it was somewhat curled towards the extremities; his beard which he wore a little peaked, as the mode was, of a brownish colour and so continued to the last save that it was somewhat mingled with grey hairs about his checks which, with his countenance, were clear and fresh-coloured; his eyes extraordinarily quick and piercing; an ample forehead—in sum, a very well composed visage and manly aspect; for the rest he was but low of stature yet very strong." He goes on to say that his father was temperate in his habits, and inclined to be ascetic; that he had good judgment, and was "of a thriving, neat, silent and methodical genius," severe, but a lover of hospitality, "a person of that rare conversation that, upon frequent recollection and calling to mind passages of his life and discourse, I could never charge him with the least passion or inadvertency."

Richard Evelyn was a Justice of the Peace, and High Sheriff for Sussex and Surrey. His appointment in the latter capacity is described by his son in some detail. But his magnificent retinue of 116 servants in gorgeous liveries, John hastens to explain, was not any sign of his father's vanity, but a noteworthy mark of esteem on the part of his friends, who came forward and sent their servants to him for the occasion. Richard Evelyn indeed was, as his son asserts, "a

studious decliner of honours and titles," and actually paid fifty pounds as a fine for refusing to appear to receive a knighthood, of which payment an old receipt found at Wotton bears testimony.

This readiness for public service without any desire for recognition is rare at any time. The son in this, as well as in some other respects, resembled his father.

Of grandfather Stansfield, his mother's father, rather more can be said than is recorded by Evelyn, who just remembers his funeral when he himself was seven years old. John Stansfield was a native of Lewes, and a man of some consequence locally. His property in Sussex was extensive. He had the manor of Challenors and tenements in Rottingdean and Southease, and later in 1618 acquired the manor and the advowson of the church of Denton, and tenements in Highton, Bishopstone and Meeching. In addition to these he bequeathed in his will land in Eckington, the rectory of South Malling, where he rebuilt and endowed the church, the manor of Northstoke,\* and land in Shipley, Pevensy and Hove.† All these passed to his daughter Eleanor and her husband Richard Evelyn, John's father. John Stansfield's first wife, Eleanor's mother, was Eleanor Comber, "of a good and well-known house in Sussex."

Of his mother, John Evelyn writes: "She was of proper personage; of a brown complexion; her eyes

\*Sold by J. Evelyn to Robert Michell, Jan., 1700-1.

†*Sussex Record Society*, vols. XIV, XIX.

and hair of a lovely black; of constitution more inclined to a religious melancholy, or pious sadness; of a rare memory and most exemplary life; for economy and prudence esteemed one of the most conspicuous in her country."

There are portraits of Evelyn's father and mother at Wotton.\* A striking resemblance can at once be noticed between the portraits of John Evelyn and his mother with her long face and very pronounced nose. She is far from good-looking, but there is character in the face, and a pleasant expression in her large, observant eyes. She is depicted standing, with a beautiful lace collar and sleeves, very minutely painted, her hands are crossed, and one of them is delicately caressing a large rose. The father with his pointed beard has a shrewd, determined and commanding look, and the artist has caught the "quick and piercing eyes."

John Evelyn was born at Wotton on October 31st, 1620. He was called John after his grandfather Stansfield, and was christened by Parson Higham, the incumbent, in the dining-room at Wotton. At the age of four his education began. One Frier gave lessons in the rudiments to his little pupil in the church porch. But after a year his father decided to send him to Lewes to reside with his maternal grandfather, John Stansfield, of whom he must have held a high opinion. Stansfield's first wife Eleanor (John's grandmother) had died, and he had married again. Two years after John's arrival in Lewes

\*Reproduced in *The Evelyn Family*, by Helen Evelyn.

## EARLY YEARS

Stansfield himself died. His wife Jane put up a handsome memorial to him in All Saints Church, in which her kneeling effigy appears beside his, and which may still be seen high up in the tower of the church. She then married William Newton as his second wife.\*

Although we may seem to be travelling far off the line of John Evelyn's immediate ancestry, it happens that his step-grandmother (generally referred to as his grandmother) and her second husband, neither of whom were blood relations, but only connections, gave him a home and acted as his guardians for some years, so that he expresses great affection for Jane, whom he calls his "grandmother-in-law," and his father in writing to William Newton goes so far as to call him "very lovinge ffather," although he was only the husband of his stepmother-in-law.

William Newton was a very prominent figure in Lewes. His father had built a beautiful stone house, Southover Grange, out of the spoils of Lewes Priory. He had a number of children by his first wife, Jane Apsley, and the home thus provided for little John must have been in every way attractive. These details are not irrelevant as they may account for the action of so rich a man as Richard Evelyn, who had married an heiress, in allowing John, and later, his brother, to be brought up and educated away from home and at a grammar school.

After John's arrival in Lewes he fell so seriously ill that his life was despaired of. However, he

\**Some Lewes Townsfolk of the Past*, by Walter H. Godfrey, F.S.A.

## JOHN EVELYN

recovered, and his education began with lessons in Latin from a Frenchman in Lewes called Citolin. A short interval was spent at a school kept by a Mr. Potts at Cliffe, near Lewes. In 1630 he went to the Free school at Southover, after Jane Stansfield had moved to her second husband's, William Newton's, house at Southover Grange.

The Free school at Southover was founded and endowed by Agnes Morley, who by her will in 1512, laid down elaborate and exact instructions as to how it should be conducted, and vested the nomination of the schoolmaster in the Prior of Lewes.\* One of the provisions says: "I will that the said schoolmaster and usher shall teach the scholars freely without anything taking of them or of their friends otherwise than of their benevolence." In 1547, in spite of the suppression of Lewes Priory, the Commissioners recommended that the school should be continued. The school was closely adjacent to Southover Grange, and was therefore very convenient as a day school for John. In 1708 the school was moved from Southover to St. Ann's in Lewes, and re-founded by Mrs. May Jenkins. The old schoolroom at Southover continued to be used for Southover boys for a while, but after being converted into a cooper's warehouse, it was eventually demolished, and no trace of it exists to-day.

Edward Snatt was master of the school when John Evelyn attended for nearly seven years. He was the father of William Snatt, who held consecutively

\**Sussex Archæological Collections*, vol. XLVI, p. 134.

several livings in the neighbourhood, including Cuckfield, of which, after serving for eight years, he was deprived as a non-juror.

In spite of the fact that John confesses that he was "extremely remiss" in his studies, and had to relearn all that he had neglected, he seems to have retained a grateful remembrance of his old master, and sent him presentation copies of more than one of his Essays many years later. In his letter of thanks Snatt, highly gratified, writes that he stands amazed, "I cannot tell whether more at the excellency of your work in writing or at your condescension so low as to stoop to give it to me in such a manner."

Although it was by way of being a free school, Richard Evelyn made a payment of twenty shillings a quarter to the schoolmaster, and he also seems to have paid for his sons' board with the Newtons at Southover Grange.\* In one of his letters, dated from Wotton, 15th of December, 1636, to his "very lovinge ffather William Newton," Richard writes: "I have also sent £5 for my sons' board and XXs for their schoolmaster for this Christmas quarter, and desire you to speak to their master to take what pains he can with them to make them scholars."† By this time Richard, the younger brother, had joined John at Southover school. This was the dying wish of their mother, who, John explains, "was extremely zealous for the education of my younger brother." This looks as if the whole idea of educating the boys at

\**Sussex Archæological Collections*, vol. XLVI.

†*Sussex Archæological Collections*, vol. IV.

Lewes came from Mrs. Evelyn owing to her affection for her home, and her appreciation of the Newtons which she shared with her husband.

There was a question of sending John to Eton. His father was not only willing, but himself made the suggestion. He no doubt thought that at Lewes his boy was being spoilt by the Newtons and was not learning much. In later years John Evelyn writes that he had "a thousand times deplored" that he had not taken this step, and he gives as a reason that he was "unreasonably terrified with the report of the severe discipline" at Eton. It has been suggested\* that this was headmaster Udall's free use of the birch, which was commemorated by Tusser in some amusing verses. But Udall was headmaster a whole century earlier. Nor certainly does it refer to the Provost, Sir Henry Wotton,† of whose severity there is no record. He "was not only a fine gentleman himself, but very well skilled in the art of making others so." More likely Sir Henry Savile, a man of national reputation, who was Provost from 1596 to 1622, was responsible for the tradition at this time of severe discipline at Eton. Savile was unpopular with Eton boys because of his severity. "He had a rooted distrust of clever youths who relied on their natural talents. 'Give me the plodding student,' he said, 'if I would look for wits I would go to Newgate; there be the wits.' "‡

When he was fifteen John was called home to

\*Austin Dobson's Introduction to the 1906 Edition of the Diary, p. xix.

†H. Maynard Smith. *Early Life and Education of John Evelyn*.

‡Maxwell Lyte. *History of Eton College*, p. 188.

Wotton, his mother being dangerously ill, following on the death of his sister Elizabeth Darcy in childbirth, whose husband Edward Darcy he describes as "the worst of men." We get in his note for that year, written, as all these early notes were, several years later, an account of his mother's death-bed, at which all her children were present, and each was given a ring with her blessing. It is the first example of his talent for writing obituary eulogics with all the profusion of epithets and expressions of woe typical of the epitaphs of the century he lived in. He makes no attempt at faithfully recollecting the impression the scene made on him as a boy of fifteen, who for years had seen little or nothing of his mother except on occasional visits; but he writes rather what would be expected of a dutiful son about a pious and exemplary mother. She was buried at Wotton on October 3rd, "at night, but with no mean ceremony." After a couple of months John returned to school. He remained at Lewes for another eighteen months, comfortably housed with the Newtons, profiting but little perhaps from his lessons with Snatt at the Grammar school, but imbibing unconsciously from his surroundings an appreciation of natural beauty and historical associations which no other place could have given him better. Seven to seventeen are susceptible years in a boy's life, and easily is he attracted or repelled by his surroundings. This little country town, even now unspoilt, can never be deprived of its beautiful situation, perched as it is on its hill on the bank of the Ouse, just where that river

breaks through the main line of the Downs which surround the town on all sides but one. Southover lies in a valley on the south of the town, beyond which are the marshes, where from the higher ground the river can be seen winding its way to Newhaven and the sea. In every direction John must have found a feast for his eyes; and in the ruins of the great Cluniac Priory, founded by William de Warenne, and in his imposing castle, in the old churches and houses, and in the traditions connected with the battle of Lewes and other historical episodes, the boy's instinctive love of nature, architecture, antiquity and archæology must have received its first stimulation.

In February, 1637, after being admitted into the Middle Temple, he went to Oxford. The entry of this date, written, we must always remember, by Evelyn when he was much older, shows that his educational progress at the Lewes Grammar school had not been very satisfactory. "I left school," he writes, "where, till about the last year, I have been extremely remiss in my studies; so I went to the University rather out of shame of abiding longer at school, than for any fitness, as by sad experience I found; which put me to re-learn all that I had neglected or but perfunctorily gained."

He was admitted a commoner of Balliol College, where Dr. Parkhurst, succeeded shortly after by Dr. Lawrence, was Master, and he made friends amongst others with Mr. James Thicknesse, "from whose learned and friendly conversation I received great

advantage." The notes about his Oxford career are meagre: he saw a freak undergraduate drink coffee, a custom which "came not into England till thirty years later"; he "declaimed" in the Chapel, he hurt his leg by falling off a table, he went to the dancing Academy, and to the popular riding Academy of William Stokes; learned the rudiments of music; and spent his vacations either at Wotton or travelling about looking at towns and cathedrals. Although he went into residence at the Middle Temple, the study of the law did not appeal to him. At the end of 1640 his father died, and his brother George succeeded to the Wotton estates.

The reflections written under the year 1641 open with a passage which shows how Evelyn, looking back, gave no high estimate of his capacity or morals as a young man of twenty-one.

"1641. It was a sad and lugubrious beginning of the year, when, on the 2nd of January, 1640-1, we at night followed the mourning hearse to the church at Wotton; when, after a sermon and funeral oration by the minister, my father was interred near his formerly erected monument, and mingled with the ashes of our mother, his dear wife. Thus, we were bereft of both our parents in a period when we most of all stood in need of their counsel and assistance, especially myself, of a raw, vain, uncertain and very unwary inclination: but so it pleased God to make trial of my conduct in a conjuncture of the greatest and most prodigious hazard that ever the youth of England saw; and, if I did not amidst all this impeach my liberty nor my virtue with the rest who made

shipwreck of both, it was more the infinite goodness and mercy of God than the least providence or discretion of mine own, who now thought of nothing but the pursuit of vanity, and the confused imaginations of young men."

The years from 1641 to 1647 were largely occupied by travel, and indeed, Evelyn was away from home with intervals up to 1652. The entries recording his travelling experiences occupy something like one third of the edition of the Diary we now have. They show every trace of having been carefully and even elaborately written up. Evelyn was no ordinary traveller and sightseer. His thirst for knowledge, his natural taste and his immense vitality and energy sharpened his powers of observation. No doubt, therefore, he looked back at this period in which so many vivid and wonderful impressions had been indelibly stamped on his memory, as a time of education and apprenticeship which was of incalculable value to him in after life. The experiences, moreover, included sights and ceremonies which made a special appeal to him, the meeting of new acquaintances of eminence in the branches of learning which interested him, and the occurrence of incidents which stirred the imagination of the adventurous young man. There could be no doubt to him, therefore, that all this was worthy of detailed reporting.

Unfortunately, travel notes are the least attractive part of any diary. Views, mountains, churches, palaces, towns and even pageants are *sights*; when

they become pages to be read it is a very different matter unless the writing is superlative. If his travel notes had been published on his return home such a book might have encouraged other young men to set out abroad. But these entries, with his other Memoirs, were destined to be locked up for over a hundred and fifty years, and their interest cannot be compared with that of the rest of his record. The disproportionate amount of space he gives to these years, however, in itself shows us the keen objective mind bent on registering his visions of such entrancing beauty and historical significance. The tourist and the guide-book may have made us intolerant of travellers' impressions. We want to see for ourselves and not through other people's eyes. At any rate, large as the proportion of pages is which comprehend Evelyn's travels, they cannot be allowed to occupy the same relative position in the story of his life.

The journey in the Netherlands lasted from July till October in 1641. During this visit he had his brief experience of military service.\* In company with Caryll, his friend, he visited most of the great towns, Delft, The Hague, Antwerp, Brussels, and describes the sights. He bought books, prints and pictures. At Ghent he joined Thomas Howard, Lord Arundel, who had recently escorted Marie de Medicis to the continent on her way to Cologne. The British agent or Ambassador placed coach and horses at his disposal, and the Queen of Bohemia received him at

\*See page 78.

her court. It can be noticed, in fact, throughout this and his later journeys how the young man found all doors open to him, and was entertained wherever he went by the most prominent public men and had intercourse with the chief intellectuals of the day. This shows that his name carried weight, and that his father before him, and indeed the Evelyn family, were held in high esteem. It also endorses a view which can be traced throughout his writings, namely, that he was determined from the outset to turn the advantages of his position to good account in order to equip himself for a life which would not be one of luxurious ease. He returned in Arundel's train to London on October 14th, 1641.

After staying in London "studying a little but dancing and fooling more" (a remark very obviously inserted by the older, revising Evelyn), and after a period at Wotton and "finding it impossible to avoid doing very unhandsome things," he obtained a licence to travel again, and he set out for his grand tour with his Oxford friend, Mr. Thicknesse. Other friends became fellow-travellers of his during the next two years—Lord Bruce, Mr. J. Crafford, Mr. Thomas Henshaw, Mr. Francis Bramston, to mention a few, but we are told little or nothing about them. Edmund Waller joined him on his way home.

Beginning in Paris, he made an excursion into Normandy, and then wandered down France *via* Lyons and Avignon, continually stopping and visiting towns, the cathedrals and palaces of which are described in detail. A strange sight, very well

related, he witnessed in Marseilles, indicates better than the appearance of buildings and scenery that it was not yesterday that he paid his visit, but nearly three hundred years ago.

“We went then to visit the galleys, being about twenty-five in number; the Capitaine of the *Galley Royal* gave us most courteous entertainment in his cabin, the slaves in the interim playing both loud and soft music very rarely. Then he showed us how he commanded their motions with a nod, and his whistle making them row out. The spectacle was to me new and strange, to see so many hundreds of miserably naked persons, their heads being shaven close, and having only high red bonnets, a pair of coarse canvas drawers, their whole backs and legs naked, doubly chained about their middle and legs, in couples, and made fast to their seats, and all commanded in a trice by an imperious and cruel seaman. One Turk amongst the rest he much favoured, who waited on him in his cabin, but with no other dress than the rest, and a chain locked about his leg, but not coupled. This galley was richly carved and gilded, and most of the rest were very beautiful. After bestowing something on the slaves, the capitaine sent a band of them to give us music at dinner where we lodged. I was amazed to contemplate how these miserable caitiffs lie in their galley crowded together; yet there was hardly one but had some occupation, by which, as leisure and calms permitted, they got some little money, inso-much as some of them have, after many years of cruel servitude, been able to purchase their liberty. The rising-forward and falling-back at their oar, is a miserable spectacle, and the noise of their chains,

with the roaring of the beaten waters, has something of strange and fearful in it to one unaccustomed to it. They are ruled and chastised by strokes on their backs and soles of their feet, on the least disorder and without the least humanity, yet are they cheerful and full of knavery."

By sea to Genoa he had a rough voyage, and in Italy, as may be imagined, he had a rich feast of beauty at Pisa, Leghorn, Florence, and especially in Rome, where he remained for seven months witnessing many of the magnificent papal ceremonies. He went down south as far as Naples:

"This I made the *non ultra* of my travels, sufficiently sated with rolling up and down, and resolving, within myself to be no longer an *individuum vagum* if ever I got home again; since, from the report of divers experienced and curious persons, I had been assured there was little more to be seen in the rest of the civil world, after Italy, France, Flanders, and the Low Countries, but plain and prodigious barbarism."

In spite of this curious advice he had intended to visit Palestine, but circumstances were not favourable.

It was June, 1645 by the time he reached Venice. Here he had a great time, as he came in for the Carnival. The gondolas, the palaces, the canal, the serenading of the Venetian beauties delighted him, and judging by the fact that one night he was shot at by a Noble Venetian while he was "conveying a gentlewoman" to a gondola, he seems to have been in the thick of it. But his very recital of the sights, the pictures, statues, buildings, museums, etc., all

no doubt examined most conscientiously, is exhausting even to read. Nor, indeed, was it all sight-seeing on these travels. Evelyn devoted himself to study, to learning the languages, to listening to music and practising instruments, to dancing even, to attending lectures, besides making fairly full notes of the wonderful spectacles he came across. Gardens, of course, occupied his special attention, and it is evident how much he prefers the beautifully kept terraces and formal gardens to wild nature, however grand. The Alps to him seemed no more than the piled-up sweepings of the plain of Lombardy.

His indispositions were not serious except when he was kept five weeks in bed at Beveritta in Switzerland on his way home, after visiting Milan and many other towns. He had an attack of small-pox, but was very well cared for. "The vigilant Swiss matron" who tended him had a large goitre, so "her monstrous throat when I sometimes awaked out of unquiet slumbers would affright me." He reached Paris in October, 1646, when he has a moment's pause.

"It was now October, and the only time that in my whole life that I spent most idly, tempted from my more profitable recesses; but I soon recovered my better resolutions and fell to my study, learning the High Dutch and Spanish tongues, and now and then refreshing my dancing, and such exercises as I had long omitted, and which are not in much reputation amongst the sober Italians."

His business in the following June was getting married to Mary Browne, the Ambassador's daughter. If only as long an entry could be given to this important episode in his life as to the description of palaces or the processions of Kings, how grateful we should be. But on personal matters he is always brief and reticent. It was not till September, 1647, that he returned to England, after an absence of nearly four years, with such an accumulation of knowledge and richness of experience as few young men of his day, or indeed of any day, can have equalled.

The memory of such a journey must have remained with him always, and no doubt he refreshed it from time to time by reading over his notes. In a letter to his friend Henshaw, who was with him in Italy, written from Wotton fifty years later, he is reminiscent.

"I serve myself also, by taking the occasion to present the most humble service of a now old acquaintance, begun long since abroad, and cultivated ever since by the continuance of your friendship through many revolutions. I frequently call to mind the many bright and happy moments we have passed together at Rome and other places, in viewing and contemplating the entertainments of travellers who go not abroad to count steeples, but to improve themselves. I wish I could say of myself so as you did; but whenever I think of the agreeable toil we took among the ruins and antiquities, to admire the superb buildings, visit the cabinets and curiosities of the virtuosi, the sweet walks by the

banks of the Tiber, the Via Flaminia, the gardens and villas of that glorious city, I call back the time, and, methinks growing young again, the opera we saw at Venice comes into my fancy, and I am ready to sing, *Gioconda Gioletti—memoria sola tu—con rammento mi'l fu—spesso spesso vien a rapir mi, e qual che si sia ancor ringiovenir mi.* You remember, sir, the rest, and we are both near the conclusion, *hai che non torni, non torni piu—mo—ri—bondo.*

Forgive me, sir, this transport."

His travels in 1649 and 1650 were only wanderings and sight-seeings in France, specially in Paris, where among other sights and ceremonies he witnessed from the window of Thomas Hobbes the philosopher, the young King Louis XIV passing on his way to Parliament. In the gorgeous procession he notes the King, "like of young Apollo," "saluting the ladies and acclamators who had filled the windows with their beauty and the air with *Vive le Roi.* He seemed a Prince of grave yet sweet countenance."

With his father-in-law as Ambassador, Evelyn of course had access in Paris to all the houses and sights he desired to visit. After his final return home to England in February, 1652, he had not many months to wait before his wife joined him.

## CHAPTER II

### HOME LIFE AT SAYES COURT

A LIFE of study and domestic retirement appealed to Evelyn far more than the Court life or public service, to which his conscience drove him so often. But it was not a life of leisurely ease. On the contrary, he was restless in the pursuit of his various hobbies, and found more scope for the concentration of his talents at home than in the world outside. Nevertheless, we may be quite sure that he would not have liked to lose contact with the great world, and it can be seen by his Diary that he considered the mere meeting of prominent people worth recording. Like other people who have a mind above the world, but who, owing to their position, are in the world, he alternated between impatience and even exasperation at the waste of time which Court and society life involved, and regret when he was not in it that he was out of it. "I came home to be private a little not at all affecting the life and hurry of Court," he writes in January, 1662, but a week later he is up with the King talking over the building of the Hospital of Greenwich. And so it went on. At a later date in 1679 he writes to Dr. Beale, when he contemplated a gigantic work on gardening to be called *Elysium Britannicum*, "I am almost out of hope that I shall

have strength and leisure to bring it to maturity, having for the last ten years of my life (but he might just as well have said all his life) been in perpetual motion and hardly two months in a year at my own habitation or conversant with my family.”

Among the notables of the day were several who possessed houses, estates and treasures which Evelyn had a keen desire to inspect. The more interesting of his journeys and visits were undertaken in connection with his ardent and unflagging search for beauty, and his desire to assist, promote and encourage the arts, and to keep in touch with the best intellectual society he could find. The value of his opinion was high, because it was founded on considerable knowledge, and this knowledge could only have been attained by study and research. The time he devoted to this and to his treatises, translations, pamphlets and letters must have been considerable. Yet unlike some authors who have told us how many thousand words they wrote in the day, or how many hours they spent on the production of their books, Evelyn records little or nothing of the days at home of work and retirement. But the intermittent entries in the diary and occasional blanks show the opportunities, even though we are given none of the details.

Sayes Court, Deptford, was the home of John Evelyn and his family for forty years. The property had been leased by the Crown to Christopher Browne and subsequently to his son, Sir Richard Browne, Evelyn's father-in-law, who was born there. Sir

Richard's wife Elizabeth was a daughter of Sir John Pretyman, and during Sir Richard's absence abroad the house was occupied by her kinsman William Pretyman.

Evelyn began staying there from time to time, and when he had returned from his travels took up his residence at Deptford in 1647 at the wish of his father-in-law. In 1649 he records that he "went through a course of chemistry" there. After Charles I's execution, referred to by him as "his Majesty's decollation," the property was seized. Evelyn bought out those who had purchased it from the Trustees of Forfeited Estates, and the complicated negotiations which were involved were not terminated till 1653. The house and adjoining land he bought for £3,500. According to the Commonwealth survey of June, 1651, it was a timbered manor house with one hall, one parlour, one kitchen, a buttery, larder, dairy house and three cellars. There were eight chambers, four closets and three garrets on the second floor. With stables, courtyard, garden and orchard the property covered two and a half acres. But Evelyn purchased in addition a field of a hundred acres, where he at once set to work on devising and planting what came to be known as one of the most famous gardens in the country. The note he himself made at a later date gives the best account of the development of the property.

"The hithermost Grove I planted about 1656; the other beyond it, 1660; the lower Grove 1662; the holly hedge even with the Mount hedge below 1670.

I planted every hedge and tree not only in the gardens, groves, etc., but about all the fields and house since 1653, except those large, old and hollow elms in the stable court and next the sewer, for it was before, all one pasture field to the very garden of the house, which was but small; from which time also I repaired the ruined house, and built the whole of the kitchen, the chapel, buttery, my study above and below, cellars and all the outhouses and walls, still-house, orangery, and made the gardens, etc., to my great cost and better I had done to have pulled all down at first but it was done at several times.”\*

There are occasional references in the Journal to the planting of trees, and one can gather that much time was devoted to transforming the fields into groves, plantations, walks and terraces, until the beautiful gardens which attracted so many of his visitors were completed. Of all this no traces remain. Deptford is now absorbed into London.

Evelyn begs to be excused of serving on the Council of the Royal Society because his dwelling “was in the country.” He was, however, not much more than five miles from Whitehall. But London Bridge was the only bridge across the Thames and in an emergency he “took a boat to Whitehall.” The pressure of his engagements necessitated his taking lodgings in London at one time in Russell Street, at another in Westminster, and after his son died he took on the remainder of the lease of his Dover Street house, “finding my occasions called me so often to London.”

\**Memoirs of John Evelyn*, 1827, IV, 418.

Apparently it was also customary for him to spend holy week in London. His home, however, was near enough for him to slip down to Deptford in an hour or so, and he could entertain guests to dinner. This took place early in the afternoon and allowed plenty of time for the return journey of his guests to London on horseback or in a coach.

Although it must require as great an effort of the imagination to reconstruct the beauties of the garden of Sayes Court out of the streets of Deptford as to imagine Pepys's "Paradisian Clapham," yet there is enough in Evelyn's notes to give us a very charming picture of his home, a setting into which we can fit not only the remarkable series of visitors, but the virtuoso himself hurrying busily from his study to his gardens in the unrecorded days when he was relieved from entertainment.

But before we cull from the records the notes which will show the scenes of activity and events at Sayes Court, and before we enumerate the procession of nine children born to John Evelyn, there is a figure whose importance is obvious, although if we only had the Diary to fall back on we might find little to say. That figure is Mary Evelyn, his wife, about whom fortunately we have enough to give us a striking picture.

Imagine a master of a household here, there and everywhere, now immersed in his writing, now arranging his curios and collections, off to London to see the King, back again with a bundle of books and some priceless *objet*, out in the garden planting

and planning, off again to stay in a country house, back again bringing a celebrity with him, up at Westminster for a Committee, enthusiastic over the discovery of a genius, railing against the iniquities of the times, talking, discoursing, perorating, but never resting and seldom in bed before midnight. Just imagine the demands on the household, not to mention the ordering of a large staff of servants. Imagine the domestic adjustments for the visitors and their suites, with life suspended and interrupted nine times by the birth of children, and almost as many times by their death—and it is not difficult to conclude that the mistress of Sayes Court must have been specially endowed with an even temper and a level head. But there was more than this in Mary Evelyn.

John Evelyn was a better judge of a tree, of a building or of an engraving than of a man. His enthusiasms were sometimes misplaced. So far as human beings were concerned, he was inclined to be taken in. It was the inanimate object rather than the animate subject which he could more justly appraise. He saw the carving through the window before he spoke to Grinling Gibbons the man. It was Mary his wife who first perceived the sublimity of Margaret Godolphin's character. It was she who detected the rank absurdity of the Duchess of Newcastle, and we may be sure that she often guided him through his indiscriminate enthusiasms and corrected his uncertain powers of judgment in the innumerable personal acquaintanceships he made. She was much more than a mother-housekeeper. She had talent as

well as personality; but she was content, or rather she delighted by self-effacement to give the field up to her eager and busy husband, and to encourage and help him in every fad and every whim as well as in his praiseworthy endeavour to live a life in which piety might be combined with intelligence and public service with artistic insight.

Mary Evelyn was the daughter of Sir Richard Browne, who for nearly twenty years was resident at the French Court. He managed to provide an asylum in Paris for Protestants, his house became a centre of refuge for exiles who continued to support the Church of England, and ordinations were actually celebrated in his chapel.

An eloquent appreciation of Sir Richard Browne's character and abilities is contained in Evelyn's dedicatory letter to him, which was published with his essay on *Public Employment Preferred to Solitude*, 1667. After describing Sir Richard's public services as Ambassador and his championship of the Church of England, the letter proceeds:

"Amidst your busy employments for the concern of States, and the interest of Kingdoms, you still held correspondence with the Muses and conversation with letters; so as what others know but at a great distance and by reflection only, you derive from the fountains themselves and have beheld what has passed in the world from the very summit of Olympus: thus Xenophon, Thucydides, Polybius, Cæsar, Tacitus conceal nothing from you who are a critic both in the Greek and Latin tongues, as well as in all the modern languages: to these I might add the

sweetness and comity of your disposition, the temper of your customs, the sedateness of your mind, your infinite contempt of vanity and gilded appearances; and in short, all those perfections which are in result of consummate experience, a prudent and just estimation of the vicissitude of things."

It was Sir Richard Browne whom Evelyn visited when he set out on his travels in 1643, and nearly four years later on his return from Italy he again visited Sir Richard. Nothing could have been more suitable than that this young, cultivated country gentleman should become engaged to Sir Richard's daughter. She was not yet thirteen, but marriages in those days were often arranged at an even earlier age, and on June 27th, 1647, the wedding ceremony was performed by Dr. John Earle (afterwards Bishop of Salisbury) in what we should now call the Embassy Chapel. Shortly afterwards Evelyn returned to England, leaving Mary "under the care of an excellent lady and prudent mother," not seeing her again for a year and a half.

This appears all very business-like and matter-of-fact, and there is an absence of any sentimental or emotional expressions in any of his writings on the subject not only of his marriage, but even of his wife at any period. But John Evelyn was by no means a cold, indifferent type; on the contrary, there are many instances of his giving way to outbursts of rapture, ecstasy and deep lamentation over friends as well as members of his family. He may have felt that references to his relations with his wife, apart from

an occasional mention of her health, were of too intimate a nature for him to enlarge on in memoirs which he certainly contemplated would be read by his family, unlike William Jones, another diarist, who kept a book of Domestic Lamentations.\* What originated in an arranged marriage with a child, certainly became a much warmer relationship after they had settled down as man and wife. It is true that except in the earlier days Mary seldom, if ever, accompanied her husband in his frequent visits to country houses; and one gets an impression of Evelyn's resemblance to one of those favoured and talented people who are taken up by society and always invited without their wives. At any rate, Mary did not pine when left alone. "Sometimes," she writes in one of her letters, "philosophic reflections have been of use to me." Her husband was a believer in "chaste embraces rather than wanton transports." But she made expeditions without her husband: "My wife went a journey of pleasure down the river as far as the sea with Mrs. Howard and her daughter."

After an examination of the available documents, more especially the tribute to her in Evelyn's letter to his grandson,† one is justified in concluding that there was that real understanding between them which is the basis of true companionship. It may not necessarily mean identical occupations or employment, it may even involve intervals of separation, but it must mean harmony and agreement on

\**Diary of William Jones*, edited by O. F. Christie, 1929.

†See page 317.

essentials of taste and belief. The completeness of such a companionship will not be proclaimed by either party. The opinion of it which the outside world may hold or withhold is a matter of little consequence to either of them. Such partnership is not sufficiently common for its existence to be passed unnoticed to-day or even in days gone by.

But to return to the earlier years. Having been married in June, 1647, Mary did not come over to join her husband till June, 1652. In the interval she sent him her portrait, painted by Bourdon. The ship on which the package was carried was taken by pirates. But curiously enough Evelyn recovered it when he found later that the Count d'Estrades had the picture in his possession, and was ready to hand it over without any charge. The journey to England of Lady Browne and her daughter had been delayed owing to the fact that Paris was for some time besieged by the Prince de Condé's army; and even in crossing the Channel there was a danger of being captured by the Dutch fleet. However, on June 11th John was playing bowls on the Green at Rye when he saw, to his "no small joy," coming into the harbour the vessel which bore his wife and her mother to England after an absence of twelve years. He escorted them in a leisurely way to Tunbridge, "a very sweet place, private and refreshing," where they took the waters. After a few days he set out for Deptford alone, with the intention of preparing Sayes Court for their reception. One of the preparations was the purchase of his first

coach, which was made from a design he brought from Paris.

The adventure which befell him on the road from Tunbridge is best related in his own words. It forms a long entry and had no doubt impressed itself on his memory.

“The weather being hot, and having sent my man on before, I rode negligently under favour of the shade, till, within three miles of Bromley, at a place called the Procession Oak, two cut-throats started out, and striking with long staves at the horse, and taking hold of the reins, threw me down, took my sword, and haled me into a deep thicket, some quarter of a mile from the highway, where they might securely rob me, as they soon did. What they got of money was not considerable, but they took two rings, the one an emerald with diamonds, the other an onyx, and a pair of buckles set with rubies and diamonds, which were of value, and after all bound my hands behind me, and my feet, having before pulled off my boots; they then set me up against an oak, with most bloody threats to cut my throat if I offered to cry out, or make any noise; for they should be within hearing, I not being the person they looked for. I told them that if they had not basely surprised me they should not have had so easy a prize, and that it would teach me never to ride near a hedge, since, had I been in the mid-way, they durst not have adventured on me; at which they cocked their pistols, and told me they had long guns too, and were fourteen companions. I begged for my onyx, and told them it being engraved with my arms would betray them; but nothing prevailed. My horse’s bridle they slipped and searched the saddle, which they pulled off, but

let the horse graze, and then turning again bridled him and tied him to a tree, yet so as he might graze, and thus left me bound. My horse was, perhaps, not taken, because he was marked and cropped on both ears, and well known on that road. Left in this manner, grievously was I tormented with flies, ants, and the sun, nor was my anxiety little how I should get loose in that solitary place, where I could neither hear nor see any creature but my poor horse and a few sheep straggling in the copse.

After near two hours' attempting, I got my hands to turn palm to palm, having been tied back to back, and then it was long before I could slip the cord over my wrists to my thumb, which at last I did, and then soon unbound my feet, and saddling my horse and roaming a while about, I at last perceived dust to rise, and soon after heard the rattling of a cart, towards which I made, and, by the help of two countrymen, I got back into the highway. I rode to Colonel Blount's, a great justiciary of the times, who sent out hue and cry immediately. The next morning, sore as my wrists and arms were, I went to London, and got 500 tickets printed and dispersed by an officer of Goldsmiths' Hall, and within two days had tidings of all I had lost, except my sword, which had a silver hilt, and some trifles. The rogues had pawned one of my rings for a trifle to a goldsmith's servant, before the tickets came to the shop, by which means they escaped; the other ring was bought by a victualler, who brought it to a goldsmith, but he having seen the ticket seized the man. I afterwards discharged him on his protestation of innocence. Thus did God deliver me from these villains, and not only so, but restored what they took, as twice before he had graciously done, both at sea and land; I mean when I had been robbed by pirates, and was in

danger of a considerable loss at Amsterdam; for which, and many, many signal preservations, I am extremely obliged to give thanks to God my Saviour.

9th July, 1652. One of the men who robbed me was taken; I was accordingly summoned to appear against him; and, on the 12th, was in Westminster Hall, but not being bound over, nor willing to hang the fellow, I did not appear, coming only to save a friend's bail; but the bill being found, he was turned over to the Old Bailey. In the meantime, I received a petition from the prisoner, whose father I understood was an honest old farmer in Kent. He was charged with other crimes, and condemned, but reprieved. I heard afterwards that, had it not been for his companion, a younger man, he would probably have killed me. He was afterwards charged with some other crime, but, refusing to plead, was pressed to death."

Although the entries in the published Journal, with occasional exceptions such as this one, were brief and intermittent, we can gather that the couple after settling down at Sayes Court in July began the sort of life—it can hardly be called routine with so many interruptions—which was to continue for many years to come.

Within the first eighteen months they had visits from Mr. Spencer, Lord Sunderland's brother, old Lanieri, a domestic of Queen Elizabeth, who had a valuable collection of pictures in his house at Greenwich. With him came Mell, the violinist-clockmaker, who afterwards became leader of Charles II's band. Monsieur Richett, "that rare graver in *taille-douce*,"

who was sent over by Cardinal Mazarin to collect pictures, paid a visit. Amongst others Evelyn's brother George, his cousin Thomas Keightley, "fantastical Simon who had the talent of embossing so to life," Lady Gerard, Mr. Lombart, a famous graver who came to see Evelyn's collection, Sir Robert Stapylton, the translator of Juvenal, and others. Evelyn himself constantly went to London, where, however, he finds "the insolences were so great in the streets." He goes to his brother's house at Woodcote, where Lady Browne, his mother-in-law, died of scarlet fever. He visits Sir Henry Newton at Charlton and Mr. Hillyard at Horsley, and also goes to Guildford. He works hard at the planting and planning out of the Sayes Court garden, and so making a beginning of the walks, groves, enclosures and plantations. After the final purchase of the house and gardens and the establishment of his household, he is able to write on June 19th, 1653: "This day I paid all my debts to a farthing; oh, blessed day!"

Meanwhile, before the end of 1653 two children were born. Richard, who only lived to be five years old, and John Stansfield, "christened by the name of my mother's father," who died after three months. These were the first two of the series of six sons born between 1652 and 1664, only one of whom lived to be grown up. In several of the prefaces to the Diary and works of Evelyn the statement is made that he had five sons. The authority for this no doubt is the epitaph on his tomb. But Evelyn himself on two

occasions\* mentions the fact that he had had six sons; and although he may have made mistakes in many dates and facts, it is very improbable that he made a mistake in this. The epitaph would not be the first or last one in which an error had been made. In the series of children who were born mostly at intervals of two years from 1652 to 1669 there is a space of seven years between 1657 and 1664, when another son dying, as others did, shortly after his birth or even being still-born, can be added to the list.

John, the second son of that name, lived to the age of forty-four, but his father survived him. The sons were followed by three daughters, Mary (1665), who died when she was twenty, Elizabeth (1667), who married but died in the same year when she was eighteen, and Susanna (1669), the only one of the nine children to survive her parents.

This sort of record of mortality in a family, mostly from small-pox, was by no means uncommon in the seventeenth century. Just as the plague was considered to be a visitation from the Almighty, and the fire was thought to be due to political machinations, so does Evelyn think that he and his wife are being chastised by the Almighty for their unworthiness.

Susanna he considered a good child, she could paint and had a genius for needlework, could speak French and "was exquisitely shaped and of an agreeable countenance." When she was seventeen Sir

\*In a letter to Lord Cornbury just before Mary's birth he writes that his wife is "within a fortnight of bringing me my seventh son." On Mary's birth his entry runs: "Birth of a daughter at Wotton after six sons."

Gilbert Gerrard came to Sayes Court and proposed that his son should marry her. But Evelyn found the father obnoxious and out of favour with the King, so he said he must first ask the King's consent. Charles gave it, but the father would not come to terms that suited Evelyn, so negotiations were broken off. There is a very pleasant letter of Susanna's to her father written from Bath in 1691, which Evelyn carefully docketed and kept. She hesitates to trouble him with her "nonsense" and regrets that bathing and drinking the water do not allow her enough time to paint and draw. About Bath she writes: "After hearing so much of the dull situation, heat and ill smells of this place, I expected to find it much less tolerable than it has proved."

When she was twenty-four she married William Draper, who subsequently succeeded his father-in-law as Treasurer of Greenwich Hospital. Evelyn gave her "in portion £4,000." The marriage proved a very happy one and was a great consolation to Evelyn in later years. He refers to Draper as "a most deserving husband, a prudent, well-natured gentleman, a man of business like to be very rich." They were "among the happiest pairs I think in England."\*

The loss of Richard, his eldest son, and of Mary, his eldest daughter, moved him very deeply. Making all allowance for the bias of a fond and bereaved father, and knowing as we do that Evelyn except in his panegyrics is not inclined to draw a long bow, we must regard the account he gives of his eldest boy

\*Letter to Dr. Bohun, Jan. 18th, 1696-7.

Richard, who died at the age of five, as a record of an infant prodigy without any parallel. Part of the entry concerning his talents must be given in Evelyn's own words.

"At two years and a half old, he could perfectly read any of the English, Latin, French, or Gothic letters, pronouncing the three first languages exactly. He had, before the fifth year, or in that year, not only skill to read most written hands, but to decline all the nouns, conjugate the verbs regular, and most of the irregular; learned out *Puerilis*, got by heart almost the entire vocabulary of Latin and French primitives and words, could make congruous syntax, turn English into Latin, and vice versa, construe and prove what he read, and did the government and use of relatives, verbs, substantives, ellipses, and many figures and tropes, and made a considerable progress in Comenius's *Janua*; began himself to write legibly, and had a strong passion for Greek. The number of verses he could recite was prodigious, and what he remembered of the parts of plays, which he would also act; and, when seeing a Plautus in one's hand, he asked what book it was, and, being told it was comedy, and too difficult for him, he wept for sorrow. Strange was his apt and ingenious application of fables and morals; for he had read Aesop; he had a wonderful disposition to mathematics, having by heart divers propositions of Euclid that were read to him in play, and he would make lines and demonstrate them. As to his piety, astonishing were his applications of Scripture upon occasion, and his sense of God; he had learned all his Catechism early, and understood the historical part of the Bible and New Testament to a wonder, how Christ came to redeem

mankind, and how, comprehending these necessities himself, his godfathers were discharged of their promise.

These and the like illuminations, far exceeding his age and experience, considering the prettiness of his address and behaviour, cannot but leave impressions in me at the memory of him. When one told him how many days a Quaker had fasted, he replied that it was no wonder; for Christ had said that man should not live by bread alone, but by the Word of God. He would of himself select the most pathetic psalms, and chapters out of Job, to read to his maid during his sickness, telling her, when she pitied him, that all God's children must suffer affliction. He declaimed against the vanities of the world, before he had seen any. Often he would desire those who came to see him to pray by him, and a year before he fell sick, to kneel and pray with him alone in some corner. How thankfully would he receive admonition! How soon be reconciled! How indifferent, yet continually cheerful! He would give grave advice to his brother John, bear with his impertinences, and say he was but a child. If he heard of or saw any new thing, he was unquiet till he was told how it was made; he brought to us all such difficulties as he found in books, to be expounded. He had learned by heart divers sentences in Latin and Greek, which, on occasion, he would produce even to wonder. He was all life, all prettiness, far from morose, sullen, or childish in anything he said or did. The last time he had been at church (which was at Greenwich), I asked him, according to custom, what he remembered of the sermon; two good things, Father, said he, *bonum gratiæ* and *bonum gloriæ*, with a just account of what the preacher said."

To Jeremy Taylor, who had in the previous summer christened the youngest child in the drawing-room of Sayes Court, Evelyn sent the news of his double bereavement. The letter of condolence he received in reply has in it a rather magnificent austerity and warning of over-indulgence in woe, of which very probably Evelyn saw the wisdom.

"I account myself to have a great cause for sorrow, not only in the diminution of the numbers of your joys and hopes, but in the loss of that pretty person, your strangely hopeful boy. I cannot tell all my own sorrows without adding to yours; and the causes of my real sadness in your loss are so just and so reasonable that I can no otherwise comfort you, but by telling you that you have very great cause to mourn . . . Remember, sir, your two boys are two bright stars, and their innocence is secured, and you shall never hear evil of them again. Their state is safe, and heaven is given to them upon very easy terms; nothing but to be born and die. It will cost you more trouble to get where they are; and amongst other things one of the hardnesses will be, that you must overcome even this just and reasonable grief; and, indeed, though the grief hath but too reasonable a cause, yet it is much more reasonable that you master it. For besides that they are no losers, but you are the person that complains, do but consider what you would have suffered for their interests; you would have suffered them to go from you, to be great Princes in a strange country; and if you can be content to suffer your own inconvenience for their interests, you commend your worthiest love, and the question of mourning is at an end. You have now an opportunity of serving God by passive graces; strive

to be an example and a comfort to your lady, and by your wise counsel or comfort stand in the breaches of your own family, and make it appear that you are more to her than ten sons."

In later years when he comes across Dr. Clench's boy of eleven years old, the list of whose amazing accomplishments and feats of memory covers several pages, Evelyn concludes the entry as follows:

"I counselled his father not to set his heart too much on this jewel, *Immodicis brevis est aetas et rara senectus* as I myself learned by sad experience in my most dear child Richard many years since, who, dying before he was six years old, was both in shape and countenance and pregnancy of learning next to a prodigy."

His daughter Mary died in 1685 of small-pox at the age of nineteen. She had become a companion to her father and he delighted in her company. Without quoting all of the long entry in which he enlarges on her talents and character, a few passages must be given, because in touching language, with an occasional apt phrase, Evelyn is describing the features in a character he most admires. After describing her piety and wonderful memory, he refers to her musical talent and the beauty of her voice, and adds:

"For the sweetness of her voice and management of it added such an agreeableness to her countenance, without any constraint or concern, that when she sung, it was as charming to the eye as to the ear; this I rather note, because it was a universal remark, and

for which so many noble and judicious persons in music desired to hear her."

Evelyn was not far wrong in emphasising the importance of a woman singer being "as charming to the eye as to the ear." He goes on:

"She abhorred flattery, and, though she had abundance of wit, the raillery was so innocent and ingenuous that it was most agreeable; she sometimes would see a play, but since the stage, grew licentious, expressed herself weary of them, and the time spent at the theatre was an unaccountable vanity. She never played at cards without extreme importunity and for the company; but this was so very seldom, that I cannot number it among anything she could name a fault."

And to give a final passage:

"She had a talent of rehearsing any comical part or poem, as to them she might be decently free with; was more pleasing than heard on the theatre; she danced with the greatest grace I had ever seen, and so would her master say, who was Monsieur Isaac; but she seldom showed that perfection, save in the gracefulness of her carriage, which was with an air of sprightly modesty not easily to be described. Nothing affected, but natural and easy as well in her deportment as in her discourse, which was always material, not trifling, and to which the extraordinary sweetness of her tone, even in familiar speaking, was very charming."

There is another witness to Mary's charms besides her father. Dr. Ralph Bohun was a close friend of

the Evelyn family. He was a scholar and a writer, whom Evelyn entrusted with the tuition of his son and to whom he gave the living of Wotton in 1701. Bohun's letter\* "to the incomparable lady Mistress Mary Evelyn" is not dated. The flattery from a middle-aged clergyman to a young girl apparently still in the nursery is rather absurd, but was no doubt well intended. In the course of the letter he writes:

"Your perfections are as far above all the rest of your sex as Mrs. Jennifer's golden chain excels a glass necklace, nay, madam, there's no more comparison between your virtues and all other ladies besides than a leathern pouch can be compared to your Spanish purse, or a farthing candle to the light of the sun. If your sisters are troublesome in the nursery I pray bear it particularly for a time, since you will shortly be delivered from thence by a young lord, for indeed, madam, your beauty is already the very burning glass to enflame all young men's affections. You are the most transcendently skilled in French, music, drawing, point-making, pincushion making and all other rarest accomplishments."

So much for the children, of whom with the exception of John little more need be said. But fortunately some correspondence remains which gives ample testimony to the high qualities possessed by Mary, the wife and mother. Before quoting Dr. Bohun on her epistolary style and on her character, any reader of the few letters which survive, one of which is quoted in a later chapter,† can see

\*British Museum. Add. MSS., 15949.

†See page 248.

at once that she had a natural aptitude for simple expression and an easy flow of language. Although she knew both French and Italian, "she never introduces foreign or adopted words," unlike her husband, who so constantly broke off into foreign quotations.

Dr. Bohun seems to have received a number of letters from Mrs. Evelyn in which she told him apparently everything that was going on, not confining her descriptions to the doings of the great and the events of high society with which she was brought in contact, but recounting, like the greater letter-writers, the trivialities of daily occurrences. "This was a peculiar felicity in her way of writing," he notes, "that though she often treated of vulgar and domestic subjects, she never suffered her style to languish or flag, but by some new remark or pleasant digression kept it up to its usual pitch." Yet he adds in another passage she never descended to "affected sallies of ludicrous wit." He says her sentences "are strict to the rules of grammar," which is more than can always be said of her husband's. But her early education was far more careful and elaborate than his. The excellence of her epistolary style is also commented on by her father, who, in writing to her, speaks of her "excellently well-written letter both for form and substance."

In describing Mary Evelyn, Dr. Bohun expresses his genuine admiration of her modesty, her good nature, her talents and her charm without any exaggeration of language, so that when he refers to

her charitable temper, the delight of her conversation and her kindly benevolence he gives the impression of speaking nothing but the truth. He also testifies to her power of reading character, of which notable examples appear in the records. "Though no person living," he writes, "had a closer insight into the humours or characters of persons, or could distinguish their merits more nicely, yet she never made any despising or censorious reflections: her great discernment and wit were never abused to sully the reputation of others, nor affected any applause that might be gained by satirical jests." But there was no oppressive solemnity in her letters. She chaffs Bohun quite amusingly for neglecting to write to her in March, 1667-8, when he apparently occupied the post of Dean at New College. "Sir, I will imagine the important and weighty charge you have to execute, your frequent conversation with Books, your constant appearance in the Chapel, emulating a Chamberfellow in treating of Ladies and keeping the common fires with the wits, to be reasonable excuses for so long a silence in Methodical Mr. Dean."

One notable passage in one of her letters to Dr. Bohun, written in 1672 when she was about thirty-eight, must be quoted. Shocking as the views expressed by Mary Evelyn may appear to Feminists, Birth Contrrollers and professional women, there are not many of them who could express the opposite view with such calm eloquence, and there are few of them who could write, paint, talk foreign lan-

guages, and at the same time teach, have "the care of cakes, stilling and sweetmeats," command a household and entertain a multitude of guests like this charming and busy hostess and mother of nine. While it is true that she hardly describes herself in this letter, what she does is to emphasise the beauty of unobtrusive sympathy, of hidden service and of concealed unselfishness as against spectacular achievement which calls for recognition and feeds on applause. The few letters show that she was in the habit of discussing books and plays, etc., with Bohun. In one she criticises a play of Dryden's which had just appeared, but excuses the inadequacy of her remarks by saying, "It is as much as you can expect from the leisure of one who has the care of a nursery." After this she, so to speak, draws herself up and excuses herself for not having written because she feels he is expecting too much of her by encouraging her to discuss "things wholly out of my way" (as she likes to pretend). Then she goes on:

"Women were not born to read authors and censure the learned, to compare lives and judge of virtues, to give rules of morality, and sacrifice to the Muses. We are willing to acknowledge all time borrowed from family duties is misspent; the care of children's education, observing a husband's commands, assisting the sick, relieving the poor, and being serviceable to our friends, are of sufficient weight to employ the most improved capacities amongst us; and if sometimes it happens by accident that one of a thousand aspires a little higher, her fate commonly exposes her to wonder, but adds little of esteem. The distaff will

defend our quarrels as well as the sword, and the needle is as instructive as the pen. A heroine is a kind of prodigy; the influence of a blazing star is not more dangerous or more avoided. Though I have lived under the roof of the learned, and in the neighbourhood of science, it has had no other effect on such a temper as mine, but that of admiration, and that too, but when it is reduced to practice. I confess I am infinitely delighted to meet in books with the achievements of the heroes, with the calmness of philosophers, and with the eloquence of orators; but what charms me irresistibly is to see perfect resignation in the minds of men, let whatever happen of adverse to them in their fortune: that is being knowing and truly wise; it confirms my belief of antiquity, and engages my persuasion of future perfection, without which it were in vain to live. Hope not for volumes or treatises; raillery may make me go beyond my bounds, but when serious, I esteem myself capable of very little."

Mary Evelyn's accounts for her own and her three daughters' expenses from 1669-1671\* show how careful and methodical she was, and how she avoided any extravagance, many of the items showing the purchase of material for mending, and none showing any excessive expenditure. There is also an account she drew up of her daughter Susanna's trousseau on her marriage to Draper in 1693. The shoes and stockings appear cheap. But  $8\frac{1}{2}$  yards of "Amaranth and silver £26 16s., and  $5\frac{3}{4}$  yards of fellvett £13 16s." were expensive items, taking into account the higher value of money in those days. In spite of the im-

\*British Museum. Add. MSS., 15949.

portance she attached to her domestic duties, Mrs. Evelyn found time for drawing, enamelling and painting. She designed a frontispiece for her husband's translation of Lucretius, which was engraved by Hollar; and she copied a miniature of a Madonna after Raphael, "which," Evelyn says, "she wrought with extraordinary pains and judgment." She presented it to the King in 1661, who "was infinitely pleased with it and caused it to be placed in his cabinet amongst his best paintings."

The portrait of Mrs. Evelyn is too youthful to show more than an expression of striking innocence with large, observant eyes. Of the developed features of the older lady there is no record.

It was in the summer of 1654 that Evelyn and his wife set out for their tour round England together. So indefatigable a sightseer may have been a tiring companion for her; but his interest in the curious, his admiration for the beautiful, and his utter incapacity to be indifferent to what was passing round him must have made him a delightful guide.

They set out in a coach and four, and Windsor was the first stop. St. George's was of great interest to him as a staunch Royalist, because of the tomb of "our blessed Martyr, King Charles." The castle he thinks "melancholy and of ancient magnificence," although he admires the view from the terrace of the "meandering Thames and sweet meadows." Through Marlborough and Newbury they reached the mansion of Edward Hungerford (Mrs. Evelyn's uncle) at Cadenham, where they stayed for some

time visiting Bath, where he found a great deal to occupy his attention. After a break, when for some unexplained reason he had to return to Deptford, he sets out again and meets his wife at Oxford, where they have a perfect orgy of sightseeing, functions and feasting in many of the colleges. At Wadham he visits "that miracle of a youth Mr. Christopher Wren." Manuscripts in the Bodleian, skeletons in the library of St. John's, a service in Magdalen chapel, Mr. Christopher Gibbons (son of Orlando Gibbons), "giving us a taste of his skill on the organ," and the transparent apiaries which "the most obliging and universally curious Dr. Wilkins" showed them at Wadham, made up a combination of the odd, the interesting and the beautiful which was Evelyn's special delight. After a week, "satisfied with the civilities of Oxford," they continued their journey. Sir John Glanville, another of Mrs. Evelyn's uncles and a former Speaker, entertained them at Broad Hinton, and they paid a visit to the "humorous old knight," Sir Edward Baynton, who kept up the custom of trying to make all his visitors, including the servants, drunk. Evelyn, who "escaped great dangers" from the behaviour of his coachman, who was in this condition on the journey home, condemns this custom as "barbarous and much unbecoming a Knight and a Christian." Cadenham was their centre for a while, from which they visited Salisbury and Wilton, where he specially admires Lord Pembroke's house and garden, and Stonehenge and Devizes. Gloucester Cathedral he is obliged to admit

is a "noble fabric," and in Worcester, Warwick Castle and Leicester he finds plenty of interest. Passing north from Haninghold, another seat of Mr. Hungerford, via Sherwood Forest, Welbeck, Worksop, Doncaster and Pontefract, they arrived in York in the middle of August. He declares the Cathedral is "a most entire magnificent piece of Gothic architecture."\* After Beverley and Hull they visit Lincoln, where he describes the wanton desecration of the monuments by the soldiers. Through Grantham and Rutland they return to Haninghold, where they parted from the company who had been entertaining them for the past month, and made their way home through Peterborough to Cambridge. Here the Evelyns stayed nearly a month visiting colleges, chapels, libraries; but as an Oxford man John Evelyn does not think the churches "anything considerable in compare to Oxford." After a visit to Audley End, which he describes very fully, they returned on October 3rd through Bishop's Stortford to Sayes Court, "after a journey of 700 miles, but for the variety an agreeable refreshment after my turmoil and building."

Sayes Court was their home from their marriage until 1694, that is to say for over forty years. Evelyn added to the house, the gardens grew, Mary's responsibilities expanded and her husband's interests and visitors increased. They both devoted much attention to the garden. While he was the designer and had all the knowledge of trees, plants and shrubs,

\*For the significant change of his views on this subject see p. 220.

she attended to the sweet flowers, which yielded their essences for perfumes, cordials and conserves in the sacred precincts of the still-room, and she kept watch over "the plenty, riches and variety" of the "Sallet-garden."

"A garden in those days was," as Sir Walter Scott says, "often used as a sort of chapel of ease to the apartments within doors and afforded opportunities for the society after the early dinner of our ancestors to enjoy the evening in the cool fragrance of walks and bowers."

Strolling out from dinner on to the lovely terraces, we may imagine the guests dispersing over the lawns and along the walks, passing before statues and fountains, and admiring the banks of flowers and the clumps of beautifully grown trees. Evelyn we can see deep in converse, now with Robert Boyle on some scientific theme, now with Jeremy Taylor on this life and the next, presenting him with "a little posy" as a reminder of his visit; or with the "universally curious" Dr. Wilkins (afterwards Bishop of Chester), who was one of the party at dinner on the day the great preacher and divine came. Jeremy Taylor wrote to Evelyn after this visit. He had been impressed by the picture of domestic happiness he had observed; yet, with his benign and wise severity, he weighs the impression he gets as a "seldom-seer" with what he estimates as the reality.

"Sir, I did believe myself so very much bound to you for your so kind, so friendly reception of me in your Tusculanum, that I had some little wonder upon me

when I saw you making excuses that it was no better. Sir, I came to see you and your lady, and am highly pleased that I did so, and found all your circumstances to be an heap and union of blessings. But I have not either so great a fancy and opinion of your prudence and piety, as to think you can be any ways transported with them. I know the pleasure of them is gone off from their height before one month's possession; and that strangers and seldom-seers feel the beauty of them more than you who dwell with them. I am pleased, indeed, at the order and the cleanness of all your outward things; and look upon you not only as a person, by way of thankfulness to God for His mercies and goodness to you, specially obliged to a greater measure of piety, but also as one, who, being freed in great degrees from secular cares and impediments, can without excuse and allay, wholly intend what you so passionately desire, the service of God."

But the most charming appreciation comes from that "excellent and ingenious friend" Abraham Cowley, the poet, who was for some time his neighbour at Deptford, and must have looked in often enough, as his love of gardening was not exceeded even by the Master of Sayes Court himself. It was Cowley who wrote:

"Ah, yet, ere I descend to the grave  
May I a small house and large garden have;  
And a few friends and many books, both true,  
Both wise, and both delightful too."

This is his impression of the Evelyns and Sayes Court.

"Happy art thou, whom God does bless  
 With the full Choice of thine own Happiness;  
 And happier yet, because thou'rt blest  
 With Prudence, how to choose the best:  
 In Books and Gardens thou hast plac'd aright  
 (Things which thou well dost understand,  
 And both dost make with thy laborious Hand)  
 Thy noble innocent delight:

And in thy virtuous Wife, where thou again dost  
 meet

Both Pleasures more refin'd and sweet:  
 The fairest Garden in her Looks,  
 And in her mind the wisest Books.  
 Oh! who would change these soft and solid joys,  
 For empty Shows, and senseless Noise;  
 And all which rank Ambition breeds,  
 Which seem such beauteous Flow'rs, and are such  
 poisonous weeds?"

The critical Pepys, with his wandering eye which  
 nothing escaped, came once or twice, and paced the  
 garden with his friend "with mighty pleasure."

But what Evelyn describes, with rather affected  
 modesty, as his "poor habitation," or his "poor but  
 quiet villa," drew the attention of many of the great  
 people of the day. In 1662 the Duke of York turned  
 up and inspected "such things as I had to entertain  
 his curiosity." That was a busy day for Evelyn. He  
 dined afterwards with the Duke at the Treasurer of  
 the Navy's house, and they went on with the Duke  
 of Ormond to inspect the project of a dock. From  
 thence on board an East India vessel at Blackwall,  
 where punch and "incomparably good canary" were

served. Back to London with the Duke of York, and at night he was present at a "lewd play" which was acted before the King. No wonder in the entry for next day (undoubtedly written on that day) he expresses the desire to be "private a little."

On April 30th, 1663, he had a visit from the King himself. This is one of the many instances in which the bald recital of fact in the diary is disappointing. If only Mary Evelyn had let herself go in a letter and said just what she thought of Charles! But we have to be content with the following entry:

"Came His Majesty to honour my poor villa with his presence, viewing the gardens and even every room of the house, and was pleased to take a small refreshment. There were with him the Duke of Richmond, Earl of St. Albans, Lord Lauderdale and several persons of quality."

"Every room of the house" shows the King's keenness and interest in his friend and in Mary his wife. Only a few months after the Restoration, Charles had himself taken Mrs. Evelyn "to salute the Queen and Princesses," and afterwards "with his own hand shown her divers curiosities." He promised to make her Lady of the Jewels to the future Queen. But this went no further than a promise.

The great storm of 1662, which Evelyn regarded as a sign of God's anger against "this ungrateful and vicious nation and Court," carried away the parlour chimney at Sayes Court and did other damage which took time to repair. The young Marquis of Argyll

paid him a visit in the same year, and Evelyn thought him "a man of parts." His father had been executed and he himself was destined to suffer the same fate. The Venetian Ambassador dined at Sayes Court before making his public entry into London. He set forth from the house "with several gentlemen of Venice and others in a very glorious train," and was then carried in the King's barge to the Tower.

The collections and books began to occupy so much space that Evelyn had to construct "a new little cell and cabinet," which he entered for the first time on the twenty-seventh anniversary of his marriage. On the same day, June 27th, 1674, the poet Laureate, Mr. Dryden, came over to see him. But he says nothing about him, nor on the other occasions when he meets him except twenty years later, when at dinner Dryden informed the company he intended not to write any more plays as he was busy with his translation of Virgil. He then read out the prologue and epilogue of his valedictory play, *Love Triumphant*.

We should have expected to hear more about the Queen's visit, but the entry reads as if he himself was not present on the occasion.

"1676. *May 28th*. My wife entertained her Majesty at Deptford for which the Queen gave me thanks in the withdrawing-room at Whitehall."

But the hospitality of Sayes Court was extended to humbler people than royalties and officials. It was their annual custom to give a dinner to poor neighbours and tenants. All this entertainment must

have been a high trial for Mrs. Evelyn and her staff.

"Do not," she writes to Dr. Bohun in 1668, "impute my silence to neglect. Had you seen me these ten days continually entertaining persons of different humour, age and sense, not only at meals or afternoon or the time of a civil visit, but from morning till night, you will be assured it was impossible for me to finish these few lines sooner; so often have I set pen to paper and been taken off it again."

In a letter\* written in the middle of the Sayes Court period, Evelyn gives a detailed account of some of his personal habits:

"I have treated mine eyes very ill near these twenty years, during all which time I have rarely put them together, or composed them to sleep, before one at night, and sometimes much later: that I may in some sort redeem my losses by day, in which I am continually importuned with visits from my neighbours and acquaintances, or taken up by other impertinences of my life in this place. I am plainly ashamed to tell you this, considering how little I have improved myself by it; but I have rarely been in bed before twelve o'clock, as I said, in the space of twenty years; and yet I read the least print, even in a jolting coach, without other assistance, save that I now and then used to rub my shut eye-lids over with a spirit of wine well rectified, in which I distil a few rosemary flowers, much after the process of the Queen of Hungary's

\*To Doctor Beale, 27th August, 1668.

water, which does exceedingly fortify, not only my sight, but the rest of my senses, especially my hearing and smelling; a drop or two being distilled into the nose or ears, when they are never so dull. Indeed, in the summer-time, I have found wonderful benefit in bathing my head with a decoction of some hot and aromatical herbs, in a lixivium made of the ashes of vine branches; and when my head is well washed with this, I immediately cause abundance of cold fountain water to be poured on me *stillatim*, for a good half-hour together; which for the present is not only one of the most voluptuous and grateful refreshments imaginable, but an incredible benefit to me the whole year after; for I never need other powdering to my hair, to preserve it bright and clean, as the gallants do; but which does certainly greatly prejudice transpiration by filling up, or lying heavy upon the pores. Those, therefore, who (since the use of perukes) accustom to wash their heads, instead of powdering, would doubtless find the benefit of it; both as to the preventing of aches in their head, teeth, and ears, if the vicissitude and inconstancy of the weather, and consequently the use of their monstrous perukes, did not expose them to the danger of catching colds."

He himself, unlike Boyle, Pepys and many others, never wore "a monstrous peruke."

John, his third son, was born in 1655 and lived till 1699. We are told of his presentation to the Queen-Mother when he was five, when she "made extremely much of him." He associated a great deal with the Howards at Arundel House, till Evelyn, with his strong Protestant views, thought it better to take him home. Under his tutor, Dr. Bohun, he made

sufficient progress to be placed under Dr. Bathurst at Trinity College, Oxford, when he was not yet thirteen years old. "He was newly out of long coats," which boys of that age used to wear at this date.

An undated letter to him from his mother must have been written when he was at Oxford. It is worth quoting because it gives us another glimpse of Mary Evelyn. The letter is severe; it insists without a trace of sentimentalism on a high standard, but it gives another illustration of Mary Evelyn's admirably clear epistolary style.

"Jack,

I have received your letter and request for a supply of money; but none of those you mention which were bare effects of your duty. If you were so desirous to answer our expectations as you pretend to be, you would give those tutors and overseers you think so exact over you, less trouble than I fear they have with you. Much is to be wished in your behalf: that your temper were humble and tractable, your inclinations virtuous, and that from choice, not compulsion, you make an honest man. Whatever object of vice comes before you, should have the same effect in your mind of dislike and aversion that drunkenness had in the youth of Sparta when their slaves were presented to them in that brutish condition, not only from the deformity of such a sight, but from a motive beyond theirs—the hope of a future happiness, which those rigorous heathens in moral virtue had little prospect of, finding no reward for virtue but in virtue itself. You are not too young to know that lying, defrauding, swearing, disobedience to parents and persons in authority, are offences to

God and man: that debauchery is injurious to growth, health, life, and indeed to the pleasures of life; therefore, now that you are turning from child to man, endeavour to follow the best precepts, and choose such ways as may render you worthy of praise and love. You are assured of your father's care and my tenderness; no mark of it shall be wanting at any time to confirm it to you, with this reserve only, that you strive to deserve kindness by a sincere honest proceeding, and not flatter yourself that you are good whilst you only appear to be so. Fallacies will only pass in schools. When you thoroughly weigh these considerations, I hope you will apply them to your own advantage, as well as to our infinite satisfaction. I pray daily God would inspire you with his grace, and bless you.

I am,

Your loving mother,  
M. EVELYN."

There is nothing in young John's career which calls for much comment. He joined the Middle Temple, published his translation of *Rapinus Hortorum*, went as a kind of honorary attaché to Lord Berkeley in France, and married in 1680 Martha Spencer. Literary pursuits appealed to him as they did to his father. He translated from the Greek of Plutarch the life of Alexander the Great, and from the French the history of two Grand Viziers. He also wrote poems, some of which were printed in *Dryden's Miscellanies*. In 1690 he purchased the place of Chief Clerk of the Treasury, but was removed in the following year. In 1692 he was appointed one of the Commissioners of Revenue in Ireland. He returned

to England four years later in ill health and died on 24th March, 1698.

Evelyn, in recording his only son's death, writes of his "exceeding grief and affliction," but he does not indulge in any such lamentations as those called forth by the death of Richard and Mary.

Evelyn practically gave up Sayes Court in 1696, and stayed when he was not in London at Wotton, although he did not inherit it from his brother till 1699. After so long a residence in a place which he had himself made, with a garden of surpassing beauty for every detail of which he was responsible, it is surprising that no note of regret occurs either in his diary or in his letters, and no word of lamentation at removing all his effects and abandoning this beautiful home, although there are bitter comments on the treatment of it after he left.

In 1696 he let Sayes Court to Vice-Admiral Benbow (already resident in Deptford when not at sea) "with condition to keep up the garden." But Evelyn had "the mortification of seeing every day much of my former labours and expense there impaired for want of a more polite tenant." His removal to Wotton is explained in a letter to Dr. Bohun (18th January, 1696-7) which can be more appropriately quoted when we come to the closing years of his life.\* Two years later Benbow sublet Sayes Court to Peter the Great. The Czar was then twenty-six, and his passion for and technical knowledge of shipbuilding made him study the practical

\*See Chapter XI.

side of the work in various parts of Europe. He came to Deptford to see for himself the actual building of ships, which was being carried out in the dockyards. His appreciations, however, did not extend to gardening. Benbow could not know this, and merely thought he was obliging the King by allowing this royal guest to take Sayes Court. Evelyn had left one of his servants behind, and from him he received some news.

“There is a house full of people and right nasty. The Tsar lies next your library and dines in the parlour next your study. He dines at ten o'clock and six at night, is very seldom at home a whole day, very often in the King's Yard or by water dressed in several dresses. The King is expected here this day, the best parlour is pretty clean for him to be entertained in. The King pays for all he has.”

The damage the Czar and his suite did in the garden was almost inconceivable. Benbow petitioned the Treasury for compensation. Sir Christopher Wren and the King's gardener, G. London, drew up a report and assessed the damage sustained by Evelyn at £162 7s., and by Benbow at £158. 2. 6. Unfortunately much of the damage perpetrated by the young barbarian was irreparable. The grass of the bowling green could be restored, and some of the fruit trees were perhaps not completely demolished. But the famous holly hedge, of which Evelyn was so proud, was badly damaged. This was caused by the Czar amusing himself by being driven in a wheelbarrow through the hedge as a morning exercise.

Three wheelbarrows were in the list of the damaged goods. The loss and breakage of house furniture amounted to over £133. In an entry dated 9th June, 1698, Evelyn writes, "To Deptford to see how miserably the Czar had left my house after three months making it his court."

In 1701, Sayes Court was let to Lord Carmarthen, son of the Duke of Leeds. In later years it was used as a workhouse, as emigration offices, and before it was demolished it was turned into almshouses. As a tragic contrast to the entrancing accounts of the famous garden, a late nineteenth-century visitor describes it as "now a wilderness of weeds and rank grass hemmed in by a dingy wall which shuts out some of the filthiest dwellings imaginable."\* To-day only the names Evelyn Street, Grinling Road, Tsar Street, Wotton Road retain in their names a faint reminiscence of the past in a district closely crowded with mean houses; and there is a pleasant little public garden of about seven acres known as Sayes Court Park which was made over in the nineteenth century by Mr. C. J. A. Evelyn to be maintained as an open space. But the Royal Victualling Yard occupies the greater part of the site of the once-famous garden. Hemmed in by buildings the Church of St. Nicholas remains. It was carefully restored in 1911, and presents with its fine organ gallery and Gibbons carving very much the same spacious interior as Evelyn must have seen when he worshipped there nearly three hundred years ago.

\**Old and New London*. Edward Walford.

High up on the East wall is a memorial tablet to Sir Richard Browne, who was buried in the churchyard. Beside it is another surmounted by two children's heads to John Evelyn's beloved little son *puer stupendus* whose virtues are recorded in a Latin epitaph and his daughter, Mary, "a Beautifull young Woman endowed with shining qualities both of Body and Mind, infinitely pious, the delight of her Parents and Friends."

## CHAPTER III

### OFFICIAL AND COURT LIFE

JOHN EVELYN, the intimate friend of Kings, the confidant of statesmen and a distinguished fellow of the Royal Society, never held any high office or public post of importance. Yet from his earliest years of manhood until his death he laboured indefatigably through a long life to render public service and to help and encourage the promotion of the best social, religious and artistic tendencies of his time. His most marked characteristic was his ceaseless and unflagging energy. Like all men who allow no day or no hour to pass without leaving a mark on it he had moments when a private life of greater leisure strongly attracted him. Moreover, his desire to absorb the knowledge he accumulated and turn it to account in writing must have necessitated, judging by his works and correspondence, periods of undisturbed study. We can well imagine how he longed for his "little cell" at Sayes Court when distracting gossip and time-wasting delays kept him in London. But we can also imagine how, when tangled in his accumulation of notes (from which he was not always very skilful at finding his way out) and filled with misgivings as to whether he could properly present to the public the ideas which

crowded in his brain, a longing came over him to pace the galleries of Whitehall and hear the latest news, to have his say in laying out the designs of the great gardens of his friends, and to give advice on the rebuilding of London.

At any rate, he, like many others since and before him whose means place leisure within their reach, felt the pull—the contrary pull whichever side he chose—of leisure when he was publicly employed, and of public employment when he sought seclusion in retirement. The publication of one of his Essays and the circumstances which attended it furnished an interesting illustration of his particular state of mind.

In 1665 Sir George Mackenzie, King's Advocate for Scotland, published "*A Moral Essay upon Solitude*, preferring it to Public Employment and all its appendages such as Fame, Command, Riches, Pleasures, Conversation, etc." In February, 1667, Evelyn published an Essay in reply, but as will be seen with certain misgivings. He dedicated the paper to his father-in-law, Sir Richard Browne, as a notable example of a man who had devoted years of his life to public service.

In his preface to this Essay he pays a high tribute to Sir George Mackenzie, and goes so far as to say that he would consider it "no disgrace to be overthrown by such a hero." "I ingenuously acknowledge," he writes, "that amongst so many pens as the writers of this age employ, I find not many that are better cut," and not knowing who his opponent is

(as the original essay was published anonymously) he notes that "he has all the topics and discourses of almost all the philosophers who ever writ," and shrewdly suspects that he is some one who is himself publicly employed, but who is hankering, as Evelyn himself well knew how, after a solitude he could not reach. "In the meanwhile, 'twere pretty, if at last it should appear that a public person has all this while contended for solitude as it is certain a private has done for action; but as I persuade myself if it be so, he has power to retreat from business; I protest I have not the best inclination to it, though for want of a better I have undertaken this." He ends by saying if some better pen were to take up the case against the author, "I will for ever be silent myself, and after all I have said to the contrary prefer his *Solitude*."

The Essay itself is charged with historical, classical and biblical illustrations and frequently digresses from the main theme. He introduces a rather extravagant eulogy of Charles I. But we may pick out a number of excellent aphorisms with which he supports his argument.

"Hermits themselves are not recluse enough to seclude that subtle spirit—vanity: 'tis a most idle ambition to vaunt idleness."

"This despising of glory is the mother of sloth and all unworthy actions."

"The truth is men then begin to praise retirement when either no longer vigorous and capable to act that their spirits and bodies fail, through age, infirmity and decay of senses or when they cannot

otherwise attain to what they aspire."

"We are not to measure felicity and repose from the multitude and number of affairs but from the temper and virtue of the subject."

"Ambition and malice, lust and superstition are in solitude as in their kingdom."

"They are the close, stagnate and covered waters which stink most, and are fullest of mud odure, how calm and peaceful soever they seem upon the surfaces; while men of action and public spirits, descending as from the highest rocks and eminences, though they sometimes make a noise have no leisure to corrupt but run pure and without mixture."

"to conflict with the regnant vices and overcome ourselves (are) greater exploits than the winning of enchanted castles and the killing of giants."

"Doubtless there are many heinous sins which company preserves us from."

"As for books, I acknowledge with the philosopher, *Otium sine literis* to be the greatest infelicity in the world; but on the other side not to read men and to converse with living libraries is to deprive ourselves of the most useful and profitable of studies. This is that deplorable defect which universally renders our bookish men so pedantically morose and im-polished, and in a word so very ridiculous; for believe it, sir, the wisest men are not made in chambers and in closets crowded with shelves, but by habits and active conversations."

"There is no man alive that affects a country life more than myself; no man it may be who has more experienced the delices of it; but even those without action are intolerable."

He ends by contrasting the two lives with a merciless denunciation of the idler, "sitting on a

cushion picking his teeth," "sleeping after a gorgeous meal," lying "at the feet of his pretty female sighing and looking babies in her eyes," "picking daisies," "playing at push pin," etc. etc.

This essay, one of the liveliest Evelyn ever wrote, illustrates better than any passages in his Diary his true character. His denunciations are against the idler, not against the writer who pleads for solitude. He seems to be justifying himself and to be conscious of some misgivings. Indeed a letter to his friend, Abraham Cowley, written immediately after the publication of the above, shows that he had often shown sympathy with the poet in a sense entirely contrary to that in which he wrote his essay. Indeed he had written, "who would not like you *cacher sa vie?* It was the wise impress of Balzac, and of Plutarch before him; you give it lustre and interpretation. I swear to you, Sir, it is what in the world I most inwardly breathe after and pursue; not to say that I envy your felicity, delivered from the gilded impertinences of life, to enjoy the moments of solid and pure contentment."\*

The letter he now wrote to Cowley (March 12, 1666-7) begins:

"You had reason to be astonished at the presumption, not to name it affront, that I who have so highly celebrated recess and envied it in others, should become an advocate of the enemy whom of all others it abhors and flies from. I conjure you to believe I am still of the same mind, and that there is

\**Miscellaneous Writings*. W. Upcott, XVIII.

no person alive who does more honour and breathe after the life and repose you so happily cultivate and adorn by your example: but as those who praise dirt, a flea and the gout so have I *public employment* in that trifling Essay and that in so weak a style as compared to my antagonists as by that alone it will appear I neither was nor could be serious; and I hope you will believe I speak my very soul to you."

This inconsistency is natural and pardonable. To Cowley he was speaking of his ideal, but in his essay he undoubtedly proclaims the course which he himself adopted in his life.

In order to round off this interesting little episode there was an exchange of letters between the antagonists. Sir George Mackenzie wrote Evelyn a most charming letter. He assures him that his book "is rarely weel writ" and (keeping his Scottish spelling which seems like the accent to give point) he writes: "It is strange for ane opposit to shew no passion bot that of kyndnesse and yee compliment mee to such ane excesse beyond my merit that I begin to be jealous that yee magnifie mee only to show how easilie yee can vanquish such as deserve praise"; and he concludes by saying "to evidencce how much I am proselited by your booke, I resolve to continuc in employment." Evelyn returned a short but equally complimentary answer, and when they met at dinner later on they were good friends.

This essay, and the circumstances attending its publication, make a by no means irrelevant preface for the closer examination of Evelyn's varied public

services—that is to say, the services of a definitely official nature which were superadded to his more personal services, most of which can be counted also as having had public significance.

Evelyn was not a man to blow his own trumpet, nor did he ever take advantage of his friendships with the great and assert his claim for any of the higher posts. There are two examples of quite modest positions which he would have liked to hold but failed to be given. In 1681 in a letter to Pepys he expresses some disappointment at not having been given a seat upon the Navy Board, and in 1690 in a letter to Lady Sunderland he writes about a post for which he of all men was particularly well suited:

“I was once speaking to a mighty man, then in despotic power, to mention the great inclination I had to serve His Majesty in a little office then newly vacant (the salary I think hardly £300) whose province was to inspect the timber trees in his Majesty’s forests, etc., and take care of their culture and improvement; but this was conferred upon another who I believe had seldom been out of the smoke of London, where, though there was a great deal of timber there were not many trees. I confess I had an inclination to the employment on a public account, as well as its being suitable to my rural genius, born as I was at Wotton among the woods.”

He himself voluntarily yielded the post of Clerk of the Council (which had been promised to him) to Joseph Williamson, who in 1672 succeeded Sir Richard Browne. In 1661, on Charles II’s return he

declined to become a knight of the Bath. Like his father before him he was a studious decliner of honours and titles. In 1666, although pressed by the King, he refused to be appointed as a Justice of the Peace. A very modest post which he seems to have held, although there is only one mention of it in the Diary, and no comment is made on it in any note in all the various editions, was that of Latin Secretary to the King. The entry on May 5th, 1670, runs: "To London concerning the office of Latin Secretary to his Majesty, a place of more honour and dignity than profit, the reversion of which he had promised me." This standing alone would be no proof that the King had kept his promise. But on May 30, 1670, a warrant was issued granting Evelyn the office of "Secretary of the Latin tongue" at a salary of £80 a year.\* Indeed he had written to Sir Joseph Williamson (Feb. 28, 1670) applying for the post:

"I do not wish Mr. Oudart dead, but if it should please God to take him he being reported irrecoverably sick, pray speak favourably on my behalf that I may succeed in the character which he may leave; it is not a station to be envied for its emoluments but I would not refuse an opportunity which might render me any nearer his Majesty's service."

No doubt his holding this office accounts for the ease with which he could slip in and out of Whitehall and reach the King's presence whenever he wanted to.

\**Calendar of State Papers. Domestic. Charles II, 1670.*

The other posts he held were fairly numerous, and although by no means eminent, some of them involved a great deal of hard work. In 1662, he was appointed one of the Commissioners for reforming the buildings, ways, streets and encumbrances and regulating the hackney coaches in the City of London. He had at once to deal with the junction between St. Martin's Lane and the Strand.\* At a later sitting the commissioners considered paving the quagmire (now St. James's Street) and the Haymarket about "Piqudillo."

At the same time he was a Commissioner "with divers Bishops and Lords of the Council" to inquire into "Charitable Uses," and in the same year he was on the Commission of Sewers as well as on the Commission for regulating the Mint. But it was his duties as Commissioner for the Sick and Wounded Prisoners of War to which he devoted time and pains for some years—"a very troublesome and sad employment"—which involved a great sacrifice of his leisure and much travelling and inconvenience. The Commission was set up in 1664. His fellow Commissioners were Sir William D'Oyly, Sir Thomas Clifford and Bullein Rheymes. They received salaries of £300 a year apiece. Evelyn's district comprised Kent and Sussex. Half St. Thomas's Hospital was placed at the disposal of the Commissioners, and their duties ultimately included our own wounded and the orphans and widows of the fallen. Evelyn soon had to inform the King of the

\*Under consideration in 1930, but not yet solved.

high expense involved amounting to £1,000 a week. In a letter to Pepys he writes of the great difficulties he has to encounter, and declares that while he has neither been sluggish nor indiligent he cannot work miracles. He tells Sir G. Carteret of 5,000 prisoners dying for want of bread and "this barbarous exposure must needs redound to the King's great dishonour."\* In a letter to Sir William Coventry he gives a terrible picture of the plight in which he finds himself. "Our prisoners," he writes ("who with open arms, as I am credibly informed by eye witnesses, embraced our men instead of lifting up their hands against them), beg at us, as a mercy, to knock them on the head; for we have no bread to relieve the dying creatures." He was perplexed when nearly 3,000 prisoners were suddenly sent to him when he had no room for them. His project of the establishment of an Infirmary he said "would save thousands to His Majesty," and be far better than dispersing the wounded into private houses, "where many more chirurgeons and attendants were necessary and the people tempted to debauchery." The King concurred, Pepys "mightily approved" of the scheme, and it was agreed to by the Admiralty, but was apparently too costly to carry out.

He went his rounds from Gravesend to Maidstone, Rochester and Chatham. In addition to food he had to provide clothes and fuel, and he received a grant from the French Ambassador. Touring in 1666 with his son, his chariot overturned on Bexley Hill, and he

\**Calendar of State Papers*. Domestic. Charles II.

was wounded in the head. In 1667 he managed to get £12,000 out of the Treasury. The work went on year after year and he had to go his rounds regularly. In 1672 he records his journeys fully. He is present at an operation on a sailor, who has his leg cut off by "the chirurgeon," but unsuccessfully, and Evelyn, witnessing all the misery and suffering, exclaims: "Lord ! what misery are mortal men subject to and what confusion and mischief do the avarice, anger and ambition of Princes, cause in the world." His correspondence\* in this year with Williamson (Clerk of the Council), Pepys and Lord Brouncker contain serious complaints on the condition of the prisoners, "the grisly objects among the wounded," and the lack of clothing. But with his deep love of the country Evelyn could find solace for his depression in the sight of good cultivation. On the return journey from Margate: "I came back through a country the best cultivated of any that in my life I had anywhere seen, every field lying as even as a bowling green, and the fences, plantations and husbandry, in such admirable order, as infinitely delighted me, after the sad and afflicting spectacles and objects I was come from." It was not till 1688 that he sent in his final account for this difficult and arduous work.

In 1667 Arlington brought him into the consultations of the Committee on fuel of which there was need. He sat several times with the Committee and recommended "a mixture of charcoal dust and

\**Calendar of State Papers*. Domestic. Charles II.

loam," of which he had written in *Sylva*. He invited members of the Committee to dinner, and showed them the fuel, "which was very glowing and without smoke or ill smell."

His appointment as a member of the Council of Foreign Plantations in 1671 at a salary of £500 a year involved attendance at a number of meetings. The Council met at the Earl of Bristol's house in Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Earl of Sandwich was President, and the Duke of Buckingham, Earl of Lauderdale, Lord Colepeper and Sir George Carteret members, as well as a number of other high officials. A circular letter was drafted to the Plantations and Territories in the West Indies asking them to give an account of their present State, "but what we most insisted on was to know the condition of New England, which appearing to be very independent as to their regard to Old England, or His Majesty." At a later meeting they had before them information about Jamaica as well as New England which led to a long debate.

In the Pepys MSS.\* (which are as a matter of fact chiefly Evelyn's manuscripts, some inherited from his father-in-law Sir Richard Browne, lent to Pepys and never returned) there is a very interesting report on New England which must have been handed to Evelyn during the sittings of the Committee. It is worth giving in full:

\*Historical Manuscripts Commission.

# JOHN EVELYN

## *“Expenses in the First Plantation of New England*

	£
For the passage of persons thither	95,000
Further transportation of meat, horses, sheep, swine, goats beside the price they cost	12,000
For the provision of food before they could bring the woods to tillage	45,000
For nails, glass, and other iron-works before they had iron mills	18,000
Their great artillery arms and ammuni- tion	22,000
	<hr/> £192,000

Besides what the adventurers laid out in England.

Most of those who did cast into this Bank were those who were in this transmigration; and their charges amounted to much more than double the above-mentioned sums. About twenty years ago it was calculated to above £400,000.

Many of the military saints at His Majesty's Restoration (flying thither richly laden with the plunder of old England) carried over great riches; so as now New England is become a Bank of money and a magazine of men and arms, and can effectually arm and maintain 60,000 stout men well disciplined and resolute, etc.

'Twas asked, why (being thus strong) they would permit the Dutch and French to encroach? 'Twas replied that New England had good trading with New Amsterdam; but as soon as it became New York they must obey custom, etc. When all is said to deter us from attempting anything of force upon them (which yet were not impossible) if New England finds that his Majesty takes care of their ministers and will

confirm them a better subsistence (for which many of them extremely being to complain) you disarm them of their zeal, which is their chief artillery and ammunition. In sum, New England is to be gained by either policy or force so the means be prudently carried on." (Noted as written to Mr. Evelyn.)

The Council of Foreign Plantations also concerned itself with trade matters, and with the affairs of the Leeward Islands, St. Christopher's and Barbados. The Council of Trade was incorporated into the Council of Foreign Plantations, and Evelyn was appointed to a sub-committee to examine the laws in the West Indies. Sitzings of the Council are noted in the diary up to the end of 1674, but not later. In James II's reign he was nominated "one of the commissioners to execute the office of Privy Seal" during Lord Clarendon's absence in Ireland.

These varied public duties to which Evelyn was called comprise functions which, to-day, would fall to a Red Cross officer, the King's Assistant Private Secretary, an official of the County Council, the Colonial Office, the Department of Overseas Trade, the Ministry of Transport, the Treasury, the Charity Commission, the Privy Council, the Lord Privy Seal and the Office of Works. In the last sphere (works and buildings) he seems to have been frequently consulted.

Five days before the great fire Evelyn was sent with Sir Christopher Wren and other architects, the Bishop of London and the Dean of St. Paul's to survey the decay of St. Paul's and to draw up re-

commendations. It is interesting to note that he was emphatically opposed to rebuilding the steeple, which had been pulled down in 1651 and never properly restored, and he writes: "We had a mind to build it with a noble cupola, a form of church-building not as yet known in England, but of wonderful grace." Plans and estimates were to be prepared. But as it turned out the work which Wren was to undertake was not one of rebuilding the central tower but of erecting an entirely new cathedral. After the fire Evelyn himself made a survey with plans for a new city, which he talked over with the King, Queen and Duke of York, who seem to have been "extremely pleased" with his ideas.

In 1682 he was drawn into consultation with regard to the establishment of a Royal Hospital at Chelsea, and he drew up the original scheme for its constitution and governance. Twelve years later he was appointed one of the Commissioners for endowing a Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich. Wren was one of the Commissioners, and Vanbrugh, who was Controller of the Board of Works, was appointed Secretary to the Commission.

On June 30, 1696, at five o'clock—the time being punctually observed by Mr. Hamstead, "the King's astronomical Professor"—Evelyn, in company with Sir Christopher Wren, laid the first stone of the intended foundation. Among his papers was found the original subscription list, amounting to rather over nine thousand pounds, headed by the King with a donation of £2,000.

These varied official duties show how highly Evelyn's help and advice were regarded, and how ready he was to lend his best services. So far as politics were concerned he had no ambitions, nor did controversy attract him, although he had very decided opinions. He played no active part in the sensational political events of the seventeenth century, but they stirred him often to express himself very forcibly in writing, and no doubt also in conversation.

His keen interest in the question of public administration and parliamentary business is shown by the letter he addressed to Lord Godolphin (First Commissioner of the Treasury) in 1696. After discussing some of his favourite topics such as coins and medals, he goes on to advocate a Council of Trade which would be concerned with the protection of trade at sea, with manufacture and employment and with the regulating and testing of new inventions. He deprecates the use of Norwegian timber in the increased house-building activity, and naturally wants English timber to be used. He enlarges on the abuses and bribery in the conduct of parliamentary elections, deplors "the swarm of locusts, lawyers and attorneys who fill so many of the seats," and he censures the "immoderate fees" charged in the law-courts.

In order to explain Evelyn's association with the Court, some account must be given of his general outlook on the political affairs which, during his lifetime, were of a highly disturbing character. It may

be said at the outset that he showed complete consistency—in spite of having frequently to shake his head—as a loyal monarchist and as a staunch Protestant.

In composing, at some very much later date, the earlier entries in the Diary, Evelyn attributes to himself as a young man no great virtues, and is far from writing himself up as a hero. On the death of his father in 1640 he describes himself as having been “of a raw, vain, uncertain and very unwary inclination,” and who thought “of nothing but the pursuit of vanity and the confused imagination of young men.” Nothing the older man says in these entries can be taken to describe what was in the boy’s mind. He may naturally have shared the general public apprehension after the execution of Strafford. We have to note what he did. He determined to withdraw himself for a season “from this ill face of things,” and went over to Holland with a friend. He had a short experience of “trailing the pike” in volunteer duty as sentinel in a company of Goring’s regiment at Gennep, a stronghold that had been held by the Spaniards against the French and the Dutch. He dined with Cavalier leaders, “where there was very good cheer, but hot service for a young drinker, as then I was”: so that not being attracted by camp life, “being pretty well satisfied with the confusion of armies and sieges,” and longing (as the older Evelyn ought certainly to have admitted) to go on with his interesting journey and inspection of the various Dutch towns, he took his

leave and visited Delft, The Hague, Antwerp and Brussels.

Again, in the following year, 1643, after his return home, he set out to join the royal forces, having spent the earlier part of the year in London, "studying a little, but dancing and fooling more." He arrived to find Portsmouth surrendered by Colonel Goring to Sir William Waller, so he passed on to Southampton and to Winchester, where he had a great time visiting the Cathedral. This was in October. In November he arrived with his "horse and arms" just as the battle of Brentford was over, and the King was withdrawing to Oxford. He adds in this entry that he "was not permitted to stay longer than the 15th by reason of the army marching to Gloucester; which would have left both me and my brothers exposed to ruin without any advantage to his Majesty"—"not permitted" probably means nothing more than "inexpedient"; his estates and his brothers being so near London as to be easily taken possession of by the Parliament. At any rate after a visit to Hatfield he retired to Wotton, "resolving to possess myself in some quiet if it might be in a time of so great jealousy," and he proceeded to work at some garden improvements and alterations.

The events so far recorded do not present him as an ardent protagonist of the Royalist cause ready to shed his blood for his King. In contrast to Evelyn, it has been pointed out that Milton three years earlier, so far from going away, came home because he considered it dishonourable to be enjoying himself at

his ease in foreign lands while his countrymen were striking a blow for freedom. But there is little or no analogy between the two cases. Milton was thirty, Evelyn twenty: Milton was serious-minded, young Evelyn was frivolous: but most of all Milton was inspired by a great movement for freedom as against despotism, while Evelyn espoused the cause of the King merely out of a traditional and conventional sense of loyalty which was, at that time, quite unaccompanied by any personal devotion. Charles I, like other martyrs, received his halo some time after his death. But what is refreshing about the relation of these facts is that the older man, in writing the account, describes with complete honesty his indifference as a young man to military service. His conduct in these months is characteristic and indicative of his whole attitude towards political controversy once it involved violence. It was not that he regarded discretion as the better part of valour, nor was it any lack of conviction that the cause of the King was worthy of support. He had a profound mistrust of violence as a method of attaining any object. He did not resemble Edmund Waller, who, like the Vicar of Bray, was ardently on the side of whoever happened to be in power. His condemnation of the Puritans was forcibly expressed time after time. Their disregard of beauty and iconoclastic tendencies often infuriated him. His support of the monarchy and the Restoration was uncompromising, in spite of his being offended by the behaviour of his heroes. But he could not believe

that his participation in active combat would help. The crudity of violence did not appeal to him. His religious nature made him believe that the right would prevail whatever combats might occur; his sense of proportion showed him the value of the things of the mind as compared with physical competitions, and his ardent interest in historic and archæological associations and natural beauty disposed him to prefer devoting every opportunity possible to their pursuit while others were occupied in destroying the very things he valued.

That his was not an heroic nature may quite well be argued. But this was not to his discredit. Too often the heroic nature denotes nothing more than a sanguine temperament, which is unable to detect any significance in spiritual considerations, but only capable of grasping the "for or against" of physical force, and is eager for the personal glory which a display of physical courage can always bring. Evelyn knew his own disposition, his limitations and his inclinations and he was incapable of pretence. As a young man, he had neither special enthusiasm for the royalist cause nor inclination for a soldier's life. His death on the battlefield might have counted to his credit, but his long life of service and usefulness was a far more valuable asset both to his country and his fellows. He did not witness the execution of Charles I. He "kept the day of martyrdom a fast, and would not be present at the execrable wickedness." His brother George and Dr. Owen, an independent who was Dean of Christchurch, came and

gave him an account of the King's end.

That Evelyn showed courage in the face of danger in pursuance of what he deemed to be his duty there are repeated proofs. He had to give up going to church as a rule, but sometimes found some "orthodox sequestered divine" to conduct a service in his library. But in the chapel of Exeter House on Christmas Day, 1657, the soldiers surrounded the building, and he amongst others was cross-questioned and examined as to why they were observing "the superstitious time of the Nativity," why they were at "Common Prayers," which were "but the mass in English," and why they prayed for Kings; and he relates: "As we went up to receive the Sacrament, the miscreants held their muskets against us, as if they would have shot us at the altar." Cromwell's funeral he describes as "the joyfullest funeral I ever saw for there were none that cried but dogs, which the soldiers hooted away with a barbarous noise, drinking and taking tobacco in the streets as they went." He is apprehensive at the anarchy and confusion on the fall of Richard Cromwell and exclaims: "Lord have mercy on us."

As the first prospects of the Restoration became apparent Evelyn was ill, but he used his pen in defence of Charles II in two notable pamphlets. He stood in the Strand to witness the King's entry into London, and the notes in his Diary at this time are full of enthusiasm. He himself had to wait a little before he kissed hands because "the eagerness of men, women and children to see His Majesty and kiss

his hands was so great that he had scarce leisure to eat for some days, coming as they did from all parts of the nation." For Evelyn the restoration of the Church was every bit as important as the Restoration of the King, and on this he makes frequent comments. His satisfaction at the fate of the regicides leads him even to note without any expression of horror or disgust that after their execution he "met their quarters, mangled and cut and reeking as they were brought from the gallows in baskets on the hurdle." He is equally enchanted when the carcasses of Cromwell, Bradshaw and Ireton were "dragged out of their superb tombs in Westminster among the Kings, to Tyburn, and hanged on the gallows there from nine in the morning till six at night, and then buried under that fatal and ignominious monument in a deep pit; thousands of people who had seen them in all their pride being spectators."

So, at last, Charles was at Whitehall, and Evelyn in high favour. His panegyric on the King's coronation expresses in an exaggerated form the ideal into which he hoped the King would fit. He was not tempted fifteen years later to survey the period and record his gradual disillusionment which came over him. He was not that sort of diarist. But his idolization of his returned exiled monarch led to no immediate reaction because he was not closely concerned with the political shortcomings and the public dangers, although he noted them. The moral atmosphere of the Court offended him more and more it is true, but

he felt it was not his business. It was the man, Charles, with his careless charm, his easy friendships, his shrewd appreciation of Evelyn's talents, his capacity to gossip with intelligence on many of the subjects to which Evelyn attached importance, his winning and gracious manner which was irresistible—it was this attractive Prince whom the staunch, high-minded and perhaps over-tolerant artistic courtier found he could not desert. Moreover, the Charles of 1660, so genuinely grateful for the loyalty of those who had stood by him in the dark days, was not yet demoralized by dissipation as he became in later years.

No King surely was as accessible as Charles II, when he was resident at Whitehall. Evelyn, throughout the years of the reign, gives an impression, through his notes, of the galleries and rooms of parade and state of Whitehall being a sort of centre of political gossip. The palace, indeed, was open and people could wander through the galleries at will, and could even see the King eating his dinner. Meeting the King or being called in to the King's closet, or withdrawing-room, or "being casually in the Privy gallery," was a frequent and common occurrence for Evelyn. This was by no means the usual court practice. It was due to Charles's habits in his palace, and when Charles died and Whitehall was burnt this royal accessibility ceased. William III at Hampton Court was anything but affable, Queen Anne was inarticulate, and the early Georges could not speak English.

So it was that Evelyn came up by river or by road from Deptford, strolled in to Whitehall, chatted with all the men of the moment, was beckoned to or sent for by the King, who proceeded to "discourse" with him. What talks they had! The King, himself a collector, had a number of treasures such as miniatures, enamels, medallions, old maps, curious models as well as pictures, and Evelyn used to inspect them and show them to others. In their many conversations mostly in Whitehall, but sometimes at Windsor, they touched on an extraordinary variety of subjects in each of which Charles was genuinely interested, as he had some knowledge both of science and art. He speaks to Evelyn on shipping, "in which he was exceedingly skilful"; he discusses bees; he thanks Evelyn for *Sylva*, and has a long discourse about trees. They talk together not only of painting and graving and astronomy, but of "glass granados," and of a new varnish for ships instead of pitch. Evelyn held forth one day on perpetual motion, and he describes an intimate scene where he holds a candle while "Mr. Cooper the rare limner was crayoning of the King's face and head" for the new coinage. He "declares his thoughts" to the King on the project for a hospital at Greenwich, and the King calls him in to "his bedchamber while he was dressing" to discuss points about the Dutch prisoners. Sometimes, he dines with the King and has "a great deal of discourse," and the King notices his various books and talks over the subjects with him.

In 1661, the year following the Restoration,

Evelyn was commanded by the King to make an immediate report on an astonishing diplomatic incident which occurred on the landing of the Swedish Ambassador on September 30th. In recent years Ambassadors have been known to leave a house where they were not accorded their proper precedence at a dinner party. In the seventeenth century the assertion of what they considered to be their rightful position took a more violent form. Evelyn's report, which he drew up after the examination of eye-witnesses of the incident which took place between the Tower wharf and Crutched Friars, relates very clearly the course of events. The facts very briefly were as follows: after the landing, as the procession formed up led by the King's coach containing the Swedish Ambassador, there was hot competition for the next place in the procession between the French and the Spanish. The escorts consisted of a large number of armed men of each nation, and a free fight of a serious nature ensued between the French and the Spanish, in which not only were horses ham-strung, and brick-bats thrown, but swords were drawn and shots were fired, with the result that there was a considerable number of casualties both in killed and wounded. Charles, who had foreseen this trouble, gave strict orders that no Englishman should interfere, and this command seems to have been carefully observed. In the diplomatic altercations which followed the affray, Louis XIV gained the victory and Spain yielded to his remonstrances.

Evelyn brought his prompt and businesslike report to the King and read it to him. Charles expressed great satisfaction, and after one or two more clauses had been inserted, he directed that a copy should be sent to the British Ambassador in Paris and a copy retained for publication. Official business being over, Evelyn adds at the end of the entry in his Diary: "Before I went out of the King's closet he called me back to show me some ivory statues and other curiosities that I had not seen before."

It cannot be wondered that Evelyn was greatly attracted by Charles's capacity to have other than official interests, and by his disarming friendliness. What indeed could be more cordial than their meeting after the plague had abated? Evelyn had sent his wife and his family to Wotton. But he himself was unwilling to relax his efforts or shirk his duty as Commissioner for the prisoners and wounded, "being resolved to stay at my house myself and to look after my charge trusting in the providence and goodness of God." The death-roll in his own parish in one year was 406. We must let him describe his meeting with the King, at Hampton Court, in his own words. The Duke of Albemarle introduced him, and the King "ran towards me and in a most gracious manner gave me his hand to kiss, with many thanks for my care and faithfulness in his service in a time of such great danger, when everybody fled their employments; he told me he was much obliged to me and said he was several times concerned for me, and the peril I underwent, and did receive my

service most acceptably (though in truth I did but do my duty and O that I had performed it as I thought!). After this his Majesty was pleased to talk with me alone near an hour, of several particulars of my employment and ordered me to attend him again on the Thursday following at Whitehall." This is the diary entry under January 29th, 1655-6. It is an abbreviation of a fuller account which he gave in a letter to his wife who was at Wotton. This letter\* of the same date is interesting as being the only one so far produced† of Evelyn to Mary (it is unlikely there were many, as they were never for long separated, although at this period it is probable there was more than one). In it he enlarges on the way all present congratulated him:

"none with more ceremony compliment and wonderful expressions of kindness than my Lord of St. Albans who is wont (you know) to overlook all the world. Thus I passed from one to another half pulled to pieces for joy and at last I came away a squire as pure as ever I went, to my no small contentment though I was once or twice afraid of making you a lady; but I thank God I got most dexterously off."

(Evelyn's father had to pay £50 for refusing a knighthood.) In spite of the bad weather he wants his wife to return to Sayes Court "by the convenience of the Glass coach," and gives instructions,

\*MS. in the possession of Frances Evelyn Rowley Heygate, printed with six other letters for private circulation by the Oxford University Press in 1914.

†Access to the papers at Wotton has not been granted to the author.

adding, "I hope you may pass the journey without danger of ye Moppet" (this word used for a little girl is evidently a reference to his little daughter Mary, who was born in the previous October). The letter ends most affectionately, "Dear, dear, your most affectionate husband and humble servant," and "God send us a joyful meeting."

Charles's Queen, Catherine of Braganza, is very well described in the Diary, although he does not admire her Portuguese retinuc.

"The Queen arrived with a train of Portuguese ladies in their monstrous farthingales or quardin-fantes, their complexions olivader and sufficiently unagreeable. Her Majesty in the same habit, her foretop long and turned aside very strangely. She was yet of the handsomest countenance of all the rest, and, though low of stature, prettily shaped, languishing and excellent eyes, her teeth wronging her mouth by sticking a little too far out; for the rest lovely enough."

Catherine brought her music with her, "consisting of pipes, harps and very ill voices."

As both the King and Queen were concerned in one of the outstanding events in Evelyn's career, the discovery, namely, of Grinling Gibbons, the sequence of events may be related in some detail.

"1671. 18th January. This day, I first acquainted His Majesty with that incomparable young man, Gibbons, whom I had lately met with in an obscure place by mere accident, as I was walking near a poor solitary thatched house, in a field in our parish,

near Sayes Court. I found him shut in; but looking in at the window, I perceived him carving that large cartoon, or crucifix, of Tintoretto, a copy of which I had myself brought from Venice, where the original painting remains. I asked if I might enter; he opened the door civilly to me, and I saw him about such a work as for the curiosity of handling, drawing, and studious exactness, I never had before seen in all my travels. I questioned him why he worked in such an obscure and lonesome place; he told me it was that he might apply himself to his profession without interruption, and wondered not a little how I found him out. I asked if he was unwilling to be made known to some great man, for that I believed it might turn to his profit; he answered, he was yet but a beginner, but would not be sorry to sell off that piece; on demanding the price, he said £100. In good earnest, the very frame was worth the money, there being nothing in nature so tender and delicate as the flowers and festoons about it, and yet the work was very strong; in the piece were more than one hundred figures of men, etc. I found he was likewise musical, and very civil, sober and discreet in his discourse. There was only an old woman in the house. So, desiring leave to visit him sometimes, I went away.

Of this young artist, together with my manner of finding him out, I acquainted the King, and begged that he would give me leave to bring him and his work to Whitehall, for that I would adventure my reputation with his Majesty that he had never seen anything approach it, and that he would be exceedingly pleased, and employ him. The King said he would himself go to see him. This was the first notice His Majesty ever had of Mr. Gibbons.

*1st March.* I caused Mr. Gibbons to bring to

Whitehall his excellent piece of carving, where being come, I advertised His Majesty, who asked me where it was; I told him in Sir Richard Browne's (my father-in-law) chamber, and that if it pleased His Majesty to appoint whither it should be brought, being large and though of wood heavy, I would take care for it. 'No,' says the King, 'show me the way, I'll go to Sir Richard's chamber,' which he immediately did, walking along the entries after me; as far as the Ewry, till he came up into the room, where I also lay. No sooner was he entered and cast his eye on the work, but he was astonished at the curiosity of it; and having considered it a long time, and discoursed with Mr. Gibbons, whom I brought to kiss his hand, he commanded it should be immediately carried to the Queen's side to show her. It was carried up into her bedchamber, where she and the King looked on and admired it again; the King, being called away, left us with the Queen, believing she would have bought it, it being a crucifix; but, when His Majesty was gone, a French peddling woman, one Madame de Boord, who used to bring petticoats and fans, and baubles, out of France to the ladies, began to find fault with several things in the work, which she understood no more than an ass, or a monkey, so as in a kind of indignation, I caused the person who brought it to carry it back to the chamber, finding the Queen so much governed by an ignorant Frenchwoman, and this incomparable artist had his labour only for his pains, which not a little displeased me; and he was fain to send it down to his cottage again; he not long after sold it for £80, though well worth £100, without the frame, to Sir George Viner."

In spite of this inauspicious beginning Charles II

eventually employed Gibbons at Windsor, and James II employed him for marble statuary in the gorgeous Roman Catholic Chapel at Whitehall, which was opened in 1686. Evelyn expresses his enthusiasm at the decoration but dismay at the service. Gibbons' carving, which has never since been rivalled, may be seen to-day, not only at Windsor, but in the stalls of St. Paul's Cathedral, the altar of St. James's, Piccadilly, Trinity College Library at Cambridge, Chatsworth, Petworth and other great houses. Evelyn discovered him, kept an eye on him, and knew how to encourage him, and by his persistence pushed Gibbons to the front.

Threaded through all these interesting artistic and official activities was a growing misgiving in Evelyn's mind that all was not well. The Dutch victory in 1667 and the appearance of the Dutch fleet in the Thames gave him a shock, although he did not blame Charles personally. He was commanded by the King to go with others and search about the environs of the City for fuel, of which there was a sudden scarcity. On June 28th he makes the following entry:

"I went to Chatham and thence to view not only what mischief the Dutch had done but how triumphantly their whole fleet lay within the very mouth of the Thames, all from the North Foreland, Margate, even to the buoy of the Nore—a dreadful spectacle as ever Englishmen saw, and a dishonour never to be wiped off! Those who advised His Majesty to prepare no fleet this spring deserved—I know what—but——"

So far as Court Life was concerned, he attended masques, banquets and balls, and rather enjoyed the pomp and brilliance of great ceremonials. But the behaviour of the series of mistresses he cannot ignore, although he does not, or perhaps could not, avoid their company. He disapproves of Barbara Villiers (Lady Castlemaine) wearing £40,000 worth of jewels at a masque, and he mentions the libel which was printed and issued in the form of a petition to her from the prostitutes of London. Even Pepys wondered "how it durst be printed and spread abroad, which shows the times are loose, and come to a great disregard of the King or Court, or Government."

One day Evelyn was walking with the King in St. James's Park, "where I both saw and heard a very familiar discourse between (the King) and Mrs. Nelly, as they call an impudent comedian, she looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall and (the King) standing on the green walk under it. I was heartily sorry at this scene. Thence the King walked to the Duchess of Cleveland, another Lady of pleasure, and curse of our nation."

Louise de Querouaille, with her "childish simple, baby face," became maid of honour to the Queen, and was soon in favour with the King. At Euston, Lord Arlington's house, where Charles was staying, she was "first made a *Miss* as they call these unhappy creatures," and Evelyn was supposed to have witnessed the ceremony—an accusation he flatly denied. At any rate, Louise received Louis XIV's congratulations on the event through his Ambassador

Colbert. Evelyn was in the thick of it during this visit to Euston. There was hunting, hawking, dice, cards. Everything was done on a grand scale, at least 200 people being entertained for fifteen days. He goes out riding with the ladies to take the air, and hunts occasionally, but he also likes stepping up to his "pretty apartment," where he was "quite out of all the hurry." Louise was made Duchess of Portsmouth, and installed at Whitehall in apartments furnished with fabulous extravagance. But Evelyn appears to become almost inured to the King's loose habits, about which, indeed, there was never any concealment. He actually follows Charles into the Duchess of Portsmouth's dressing-room, where she was in her "morning loose garments, her maids combing her, newly out of bed." He modestly averts his gaze, and is able to go into raptures over the tapestry, the paintings, the cabinets, screens, clocks, sconces, etc., etc. He surfeits of this and goes "contented home to my poor, but quiet villa," and he concludes the entry, "What contentment can there be in the riches and splendour of this world purchased with vice and dishonour." One feels he had given up Charles as hopeless, and of course did not care a rap what happened to Querouaille; but it did hurt him that such beautiful things as he saw in that room should be desecrated by being used as the wages of a notorious harlot.

However, he attended a great banquet "of sweetmeats and music" she gave to the Ambassador from Morocco and his retinue, "who behaved

themselves with extraordinary moderation and modesty though placed about a long table, a lady between two Moors, and amongst these were the King's natural children, Lady Lichfield and Lady Sussex, the Duchess of Portsmouth, Nelly, etc., concubines and cattle of that sort, as splendid as jewels and excess of bravery could make them."\*

Evelyn was no ascetic; he liked good fare and enjoyed banquets and dinners. He was not strait-laced, but he hated excess; drunkenness offended him, and the coarseness of the dissipations he encountered was repellent to a nature which laid great store in the refinements of life. He deplored the fashion of heavy make-up which women had adopted then, as they have periodically throughout the centuries. Women painting themselves he notes as "a most ignominious thing and only used by prostitutes." It was not only in Whitehall of course that he came across extravagance, "deep and prodigious gaming," and wild revelling; the laxity of the Court naturally infected all high Society.

Early in the reign Evelyn was present at some wild revels which displeased him:

"1661-2. *Jan.* 6. This evening according to custom, His Majesty opened the revels of that night by throwing the dice himself in the Privy Chamber, where was a table set on purpose, and lost his £100. (The year before he won £1,500.) The ladies also played very deep. I came away when the Duke of Ormond had won about £1,000 and left them still at

\*Diary, Jan. 24th, 1681-2.

passages, cards, etc. At other tables both there and at the groom-porters, observing the wicked folly and monstrous excess of passion amongst some losers; sorry am I that such a wretched custom as play to that excess should be countenanced in a Court which ought to be an example of virtue to the rest of the Kingdom."

A few weeks later, when he is describing the havoc wrought by a great storm, he adds: "So exceedingly was God's hand against this ungrateful and vicious nation and Court." Expressions of his opinion on the atmosphere of the court are given in his *Life of Margaret Godolphin*.\* His disgust seems to have reached a climax about a fortnight before the King's last illness. "I saw this evening a scene of such profuse gaming, and the King in the midst of his three concubines (the Duchesses of Portsmouth, Cleveland and Mazarin), as I have never before seen—luxurious dallying and profaneness."

The full account of the King's death occupies a long entry, and must have been written from hearsay. The best account from an eye-witness is given by Thomas Bruce (afterwards second Earl of Ailesbury), a gentleman of the bedchamber.† But Evelyn's final estimate of Charles's character is interesting.

"Thus died King Charles II, of a vigorous and robust constitution, and in all appearance promising a long life. He was a prince of many virtues, and many great imperfections; debonair, easy of access

\*See pages 252-262.

†See Austin Dobson's edition of the Diary, pp. 138-9, note.

not bloody nor cruel; his countenance fierce, his voice great, proper of person, every motion became him; a lover of the sea, and skilful in shipping; not affecting other studies, yet he had a laboratory, and knew of many empirical medicines, and the easier mechanical mathematics; he loved planting and building, and brought in a politer way of living, which passed to luxury and intolerable expense. He had a particular talent in telling a story, and facetious passages, of which he had innumerable; this made some buffoons and vicious wretches too presumptuous and familiar, not worthy the favour they abused. He took delight in having a number of little spaniels follow him and lie in his bedchamber, where he often suffered the bitches to puppy and give suck, which rendered it very offensive, and indeed made the whole court nasty and stinking. He would doubtless have been an excellent prince, had he been less addicted to women, who made him uneasy, and always in want to supply their unmeasurable profusion, to the detriment of many indigent persons who had signally served both him and his father. He frequently and easily changed favourites to his great prejudice."

After commenting on public events he adds: "He was ever kind to me and very gracious on all occasions, and therefore I cannot without ingratitude, but deplore his loss which for many respects as well as duty, I do with all my soul."

Evelyn had by no means the same feelings for James II. He had been severely shocked on Easter day in 1673, when for the second time James did not receive the Communion, and he declares that it "gave exceeding grief and scandal to the whole

nation that the heir of it and the son of a martyr for the Protestant religion should apostatise. What the consequences of this will be God only knows, and wise men dread" (an entry obviously written on the day and not added to or altered in after years). He gives an epitome of James's declaration at his first Council, in which the new King said: "That he would endeavour to maintain the Government both in Church and State, as by law established, its principles being so firm for monarchy and the members of it showing themselves so good and loyal subjects."

He had no intimacy with any of the other monarchs in whose reigns he lived. Except for a curious conversation at which Evelyn was present at Winchester between James and others, on miracles, relics and second sight, he does not seem to have had any private talks with the King, and he only records ceremonial events and all the disastrous episodes which ended his reign. There is one occasion when he was present at Court at "a solemn ball" (solemn, we may conclude, as compared with the balls of the previous reign). Evelyn stands next the King and the Queen, who talk to him about the music. The events of the last days before James's final flight are carefully recorded. When the King came back from Rochester the first time he went on his arrival in London to mass, dined in public "a Jesuit saying grace," and Evelyn adds, "I was present."

But now for Evelyn easy intercourse with his sovereign was over. He found William III stately,

serious and reserved, and of morose temper, and neither with him nor Queen Mary, for whom he expresses admiration, does he record having any talks. He notes the Queen's death from smallpox, and William's death seven years later, in 1702, from a fall from his horse, with few words and no comment.

He was now an old man, and could not be expected to take any part in court activities, but he watched public events very closely. In 1703 he considered the honours bestowed on Marlborough excessive, but he describes him as "a very handsome person well spoken and affable, and supports his want of acquired knowledge by keeping good company." In his eighty-fourth year he meets the Duke who, after further victories, had now a high position. The old man is highly gratified at the Duke's treatment of him: he "came to me and took me by the hand with extraordinary familiarity and civility, as formerly he was used to do without any alteration of his good nature. He had a most rich George in a sardonyx set with diamonds of very great value; for the rest very plain. I had not seen him for some years and believed he might have forgotten." With good Queen Anne one cannot imagine that Evelyn had anything in common, and before she became Queen he was concerned that "she made so little figure."

Evelyn was a courtier, not of the obsequious and fawning variety, nor as a self-seeking man ambitious for place and position, but because he had a genuine veneration for the monarchy. He found in Charles II a sympathetic and entertaining friend; the

others did not appeal to him. He felt through court influence, and more especially through direct influence on the sovereign, he could further many of the projects which he thought would be for the good of the country and for the glory and reputation of the state. So startling were the changes and so exciting the events he witnessed, that he believed a close observation and a constant record of public affairs was an occupation which he ought to pursue as a necessary accompaniment to his other varied and absorbing interests.

His official duties and his contact with the Court did not cover all Evelyn's public activities. The political and constitutional crises through which he lived had fundamentally religious origins. Religion affected him deeply, and ecclesiastical politics therefore occupied his attention very closely. A perusal of his Diary shows the remarkable position he seems to have held in the councils of the church. The doors of Lambeth were opened for Evelyn surely more than for any other unofficial layman during the second half of the seventeenth century. He "has intercourse" with Juxon, who was Archbishop from 1663 to 1667. He was present and describes fully the ceremony of the translation of Sheldon from the Bishopric of London to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, and later he visits him at Lambeth. With Sancroft, in his chequered career, Evelyn had very intimate relations. When Sancroft was still Dean of St. Paul's he went with Evelyn and others to inspect St. Paul's with a view to advising on its repair.

Evelyn was taken later in the archbishop's barge to Lambeth, and dined there on several occasions, meeting high ecclesiastics. He consulted Sancroft when he refused as commissioner of the Privy Seal to give a licence "for printing and publishing divers Popish books." When Sancroft with six other Bishops refused to read James II's Declaration of liberty of conscience Evelyn visited them in prison at the Tower, and greatly rejoiced at their release. In the confusion at the arrival of William of Orange a long letter was addressed by Evelyn to the Archbishop warning him of the schemes of the Jesuits "who are more than ever busy among us." Sancroft was very grateful, and "assured me they took my counsel in that particular and that it came very seasonably." One of the points pressed by Evelyn was that the appellation "The Church of England as by Law Established" was insufficient in any prayer or declaration, and that direct mention should be made of the "Reformed" or "Protestant" religion. He was invited with the highest ecclesiastics and officials to a conference at Lambeth, where the difficult question of the manner of receiving William was discussed, and there was much difference of opinion. He was in close consultation with the Archbishop again after William and Mary had been crowned—a ceremony Sancroft excused himself from attending. In fact, during these days, Evelyn was never long absent from the archiepiscopal palace, discussing not only the political situation but "the final destruction of Antichrist." Sancroft's refusal to take the oath of

allegiance to William led to his suspension with other Bishops in 1689. Evelyn continued to visit him even when he was abandoned and alone, with the house "altogether disfurnished and his books packing up, waiting to receive his summons to depart." Tillotson succeeded Sancroft and again Evelyn is to be found at his dinner table. This time the gardener for a moment seems not to have been able to suppress himself.

"1692. *December 28th.* Dined at Lambeth with the new Archbishop. Saw the effect of my greenhouse furnace, set up by the Archbishop's son-in-law." Tenison succeeded Tillotson in 1694. Evelyn refers to him as "my dear and particular friend." Ten years before, when he was vicar of St. Martin's, Evelyn heard him preach at Whitehall, and made the following note in his Diary:

"I esteem him to be one of the most profitable preachers in the Church of England being also of a most holy conversation, very learned and ingenious. The pains he takes and care of his parish will, I fear, wear him out, which would be an inexpressible loss."

Greatly does he rejoice when Tenison, after being Bishop of Lincoln, was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and it is not long before he is at Lambeth with "much company and great cheer" inspecting the garden and the furniture. In fact he was there again and again. One visit is recorded in 1702 when he was eighty-two. In correspondence with him there is a note of great cordiality in Tenison's letters.

Two other high ecclesiastics may be mentioned with whom Evelyn was friendly. Dr. Burnet, who eventually became Bishop of Salisbury, and Dr. Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells. He contributed papers to Burnet's *History of the Reformation*; he admired him as a preacher and thought him "a person of extraordinary parts." Ken, like Sancroft, was one of the seven Bishops, and was also deprived owing to his refusal to swear allegiance to William III. Evelyn heard him preach with "his accustomed action, zeal and energy" on many occasions, and met him at conferences at Lambeth. Other instances could be given of his intimacy with the leading clergy of the Church of England.

It would almost seem as if, with the exception of parliamentary life, for which he had no inclination, there was hardly any branch of public affairs to which John Evelyn was not ready to lend his best services and willingly devote his time and leisure.

## CHAPTER IV

### INTERESTS AND OCCUPATIONS

SIR GODFREY KNELLER was a dull portrait painter. There is a family likeness in all his women, and he painted no very memorable portraits of men. But he was Court Painter and was well thought of in his day. He painted Evelyn in 1685, but judging by the reproductions, this portrait was not in any way striking. Four years later he painted a second portrait which certainly has merit; it is distinctive, well-composed and shows character. Evelyn was sixty-eight at the time, but except for his white locks he seems upright and alert, and there is a shrewd, discriminating brightness in his eyes, and the play of a pleasant smile on his lips. His pronounced nose, which he inherited from his mother, is a distinguishing rather than a disfiguring feature. He is holding a copy of *Sylva* in a hand with long, slender, sensitive-looking fingers which certainly must have been faithfully copied. It was Pepys who had insisted on this portrait being painted, because he said he was collecting portraits of "The Boyles, the Gales, and the Newtons of our nation," to which Evelyn replied, "What, in God's name, should a planter of colewort do amongst such worthies?" The other portraits of him by Nanteuil, Vanderborcht and Robert Walker

## INTERESTS AND OCCUPATIONS

are much earlier, and show him as a distinguished-looking and serious young man.

Whatever frivolities we hear of are very trifling, and are, all of them, comments by the older Evelyn. Serious he undoubtedly was, because the most fundamental quality in him was his deeply religious nature. In spite of his reserve and the absence of any introspection in his memoirs, his moral resignation and humility are constantly apparent, and, most of all, his particular devotion to the Church of England. He stood out against the Puritan attack during the Commonwealth and, after the Restoration, against the gradual hold the Roman Catholic Church gained first in the court and then on the sovereign. When writing up the records of his early life he makes a special mention on July 2nd, 1637, of the first occasion on which he received "the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper" in Balliol College Chapel, and he adds: "At this time was the Church of England in the greatest splendour, all things decent, and becoming the Peace, and the persons that governed." In after years attendance at Holy Communion is frequently noted.

During the Commonwealth he is glad, when in Deptford Church, that the minister, though an independent, preached sound doctrine; but the christening of his child had to be performed in the library at Sayes Court, because the minister dared not use the Church of England service. The sermon of "a tradesman and mechanic" he describes as "feculent stuff." While "the usurpers possessed

the pulpits" he went to church because he did not want to be "suspected for a Papist," but as no feasts and fast days were observed he also held services in his library. In 1656 he records with great distress the sermon by Dr. Wild which was "the funeral sermon of preaching," as the proclamation followed that no Church of England clergyman might preach, administer the Sacraments or teach. He describes it as "the mournfullest day that in my life I had seen, or the Church of England herself, since the Reformation." Things went from bad to worse, and in 1659 he thinks the poor Church of England is "breathing as it were her last," and a solemn fast is privately observed for the calamity of the Church. Then came the reaction, and with the Restoration the Church was once more rehabilitated. But he is very critical of the Declaration of Indulgence which dispensed with the laws against Nonconformists. On the other hand he had no confidence whatever in Titus Oates, "a vain, insolent man," whose discovery of Popish plots was disproved.

The long entry in the Diary of October 2nd, 1685, presents Evelyn in a state of great agitation once more with regard to the fortunes of the Church. He records with detail the dinner after which Pepys revealed to him, with papers confirming the story, how James II confessed that his predecessor and brother, Charles II, had died a Roman Catholic. Evelyn "was heartily sorry to see all this." He remembers and writes down with bitterness how the late King had been perverted, the "dissolute and

highly profane" nature of his court and its "voluptuous and sensual life," and how the nation had suffered. But he ends on a note of hope and confidence that the Church will weather these storms, for "whatever do become of the Church of England, it is certainly, of all the Christian professions on the earth, the most primitive, apostolic and excellent."

The trial and acquittal of the Bishops who refused to read the injunction for the abolition of Tests are recorded by him with great satisfaction. Nevertheless, there is a passage in one of his letters to George Tuke which shows that, strong Protestant as he was, he preserved a broadminded and tolerant attitude towards Catholics. He has, he writes, "a very great charity for all who sincerely adore the blessed Jesus, our common and dear Saviour"; therefore, in spite of "passions and errors let us possess ourselves in patience and charity." There is a long letter of his to Dr. Fell (Bishop of Oxford), dated March 19th, 1681-2, in which he calls attention to the great danger to the Protestant religion of certain books which had appeared, and pleads that Oxford may be "first in the field" in the Church's defence. He describes himself as one who "though he be no man of the Church is yet a son of the Church, and greatly concerned for her; and though he be not learned he converses much with books and men that are as well at Court as in town and the country."

Like many diarists Evelyn was in the habit of recording sermons, more especially in his old age, when the long epitomes he writes out of those

discourses must have involved much labour. There are many instances in the Diary showing that he was often critical of the preacher: the Bishop of Gloucester was "full of divisions and scholastical"; another time he hears "a confused discourse with a great deal of Greek and ostentation of learning to but little purpose"; and "a hopeful young man yet somewhat raw, newly come from college, full of Latin sentences which in time will wear off." But behind the sermons, the sectarian strife and the religious observances, and apart from his preference for certain doctrines and services, Evelyn's upright, tolerant and transparently honest nature showed that his religion was a reality to him and was a guide for his conduct and a consolation in his trials.

The conflicting and, for him, disturbing religious tendencies and extremes of intolerance through which he had to steer during the Commonwealth, the Restoration and the Revolution, made him desire to clarify his mind by writing. *The History of Religion* (a rational account of his true religion) was found in the list of "Things I would write out fairly." He had, indeed, made a fair copy of the manuscript which he had begun in 1657 and had added to at subsequent periods. But he was not satisfied, and noted that he did not pretend "to dress it for the public" as it would require much "revising and polishing." Actually, it was not published till 1850, when its value as a declaration of faith from a notable personality was of course entirely lost. On the one side, he had been shocked by the enormities per-

petrated by the Commonwealth against the Church, and then "after God had restored the laws and brought back the captivity in so stupendous a manner," there came "the luxury and the avowed adulteries . . . the gentry dissolute, theatres profane, the people libertine"; so he made up his mind to attempt to clear up the matter *ab initio* in order "to extricate my spirit from these perplexities" and examine whether there were indeed such a thing as God at all. Before embarking on his task he makes a sincere and confident declaration of his own orthodox faith.

"Had I anything to bless Heaven for above the rest (as I have many) it would be verily for this, that I am not in the least temptation to doubt, much less disbelieve, any one article of our most holy truth, for any thing that I have heard or read from any of these magnificent and daring wits (real fops and confident triflers) and whom I look upon with pity and as set up by that haughty and imposterous spirit whom God permits to exercise the sons of men, that those who escape and are approved may be made manifest and receive an immortal reward."

In those days unbelief was not the enemy. On the contrary the deep, fervent and passionate sincerity of religious belief was the very cause of the bitterness of sectarian strife. The absence of such strife does not denote general acquiescence but general indifference. In the seventeenth century few were indifferent, and Evelyn was certainly not one of them. His "History," as may be imagined, was elaborate and compre-

hensive, passing from theology to a definition of the soul, through methods of worship to the worshipper, touching on pagan philosophy, emphasising the authority of the scriptures and analysing the authenticity of miracles. He then proceeds from antediluvian Religion through Jewish and Mosaic law to the formation of sects, and takes the characteristics of each century separately, denouncing the corruption of the Church of Rome and ending on a note of hope that Christianity will be restored to its primitive purity. It is not a very interesting disquisition to read to-day, but in its straightforward and often indignant argument it would have had its effect if it had been published in the years when it was compiled.

Evelyn was not one of those who separated his religion from his life. His constant activity and the very multiplicity of his pursuits is a proof of his disciplined intention to avoid the snare of idleness which so easily entraps the unwary.

Taking into account the habits of the day, which allowed him to express satisfaction when he saw the remains of the traitors who had been hanged, drawn and quartered, and, although it was not much to his credit that he dined with the notorious judge Jeffreys and seemed pleased because the judge, who has been described as the wickedest man in English history, used him "with great respect," Evelyn was essentially a humane man. He deplored cruelty to man or beast. Cock-fighting, dog-fighting, bear- and bull-baiting he describes as butchery sports, bar-

barous cruelties, rude and dirty pastimes. There does not, however, seem to have been any particular reason why he should have gone to the Bear-garden in Southwark to watch them, any more than why when in France he should have witnessed the hideous torturing of an unfortunate prisoner at the Châtelet, simply excusing himself for not waiting for the similar treatment of another malefactor by saying "the spectacle was so uncomfortable."

About Evelyn's sense of humour there may always be some doubt. It may have been rather elementary. He is jovial at times, and has a hearty laugh over the man who had an exhibition of cardboard animals whose cries he imitated. There are other instances of his being able to relax and see the humorous side of things which show that the staid tone of the Diary must not be taken as an indication that he was ever austere and ponderous in his solemnity. Even frivolity could gain the upper hand, as Pepys, with his highly developed sense of humour, tells us in the following incident, which, however, Evelyn did not think worth recording in his Diary. The place was a party at Captain Cocke's (Treasurer to the Commissioners of the Sick and Wounded), the occasion, the seizure of some East India prizes by Lord Sandwich. They were all in a good humour.

"The receipt of this news did put us all into such an ecstasy of joy, that it inspired into Sir J. Minnes and Mr. Evelyn such a spirit of mirth, that in all my life I never met with so merry a two hours as our company this night was. Among other humours,

Mr. Evelyn's repeating of some verses made up of nothing but the various acceptations of *may* and *can*, and doing it so aptly upon occasion of something of that nature, and so fast, did make us all die almost with laughing, and did so stop the mouth of Sir J. Minnes in the middle of all his mirth, (and in a thing agreeing with his own manner of genius) that I never saw any man so out-done in all my life; and Sir J. Minnes's mirth too to see himself out-done, was the crown of all our mirth."

Evelyn's interested amusement in odd and often very childish things is never concealed, and shows that he retained, as the best men always have, little corners where the child was still alive. A man devoid of wonder, even when it may appear to others silly, must be like the man who is frightened of making a fool of himself, either a pedant or a prig. Scattered through the Diary, notes may be found, sometimes amounting to long descriptions which often show great gullibility, of things that arrested his curiosity: a rope-dancer, a rattlesnake, a large whale, dancing monkeys, diving bells, clocks, a giantess, a fire-eater, a knife-swallower, a man who swallowed live coals, etc.

In his gardening books and in *Sylva* he enumerates the "medical virtues" of plants and trees, and some of their almost magic properties, reminiscent of the earlier herbals. But one hesitates to laugh at the simple superstitions of the past which, on the contrary, should be treated with respect. We may pride ourselves on living in a utilitarian and more rationalistic age, but we, too, have our pet super-

stitutions, less picturesque, but just as deep-seated. They will, in time, be derided with contempt by posterity, till posterity, in its turn, is subjected to the same treatment from a still more remote generation.

In turning to Evelyn's interests and occupations other than gardening and writing, consideration must first be given to his equipment, namely his books. His writings are profusely peppered over with references and quotations showing that he had consulted a number of learned authorities whose works he possessed. He began collecting books on his early travels abroad, and his "little cell" at Sayes Court and his library at Wotton gradually became stacked with them. Dr. William Rand, a doctor of physic, published in 1657 *The Mirrour of True Nobility and Gentility*, being Pierre Gassendi's Life of Claude Fabri de Peiresc. The original book of which this was a translation was published in Paris in 1641. Peiresc, who was a Senator of the Parliament of Aix, was a rare French gentleman "whose sprightly curiosity left nothing unsearcht into, in the vast and all comprehending Dominions of Nature and Art." Dr. Rand very appropriately dedicated his volume to Evelyn considering that he possessed the "Peireskian virtues." Peiresc was a great bibliophil, and when Evelyn says, "I ever look upon a library with the reverence of a temple," and also when he translates Gabriel Naudé's *Instructions for the erecting of a Library*, he shows that the enrichment of his collection of books by rare editions, curious volumes, pre-

sentations and purchases had become one of his major pursuits. His own astonishing industry, supplemented by directions he derived from Naudé's *Instructions*, led him to arrange his books and draw up a catalogue of the most elaborate possible description. A full account of the six headings and 120 sub-headings in his catalogue is given in an interesting paper, *John Evelyn as a Bibliophil*, by Mr. Geoffrey Keynes.\*

Pepys, as may be seen in his library at Magdalen College, adopted the very simple method of arranging his books according to size, and had made little wooden pedestals imitating the binding of the book for those which were too short to make a regular line. He regarded Evelyn's translation of Naudé as a book "above my reach." His opinion of Evelyn's catalogue is not recorded. But, in order to carry out the elaborate arrangement of the books according to the divisions in the catalogue under the names of Greek gods, Roman Emperors, the seven sages, muses, graces, planets, etc., and to compile the catalogue itself, the collector obviously had need of help. Between 1645 and 1660 Richard Hoare, "an incomparable writer of several hands," acted as his librarian, scribe and valet. He designed title pages, transcribed passages, did illuminations, superintended the purchase of books and was in charge of the binding. An extract from one of Hoare's letters shows the conscientious way in which he discharged his duties:

\*London. The Bibliographical Society, 1931.

"The bookbinder is not so honest as I supposed he was, for notwithstanding his quotidian promises to me, he has not done a stitch on your books. I beseech you, sir, imagine not that it proceeds out of any negligence of mine, for I protest he hath not wanted persecution. Your book of *Taille-douces* I have almost finished, and pasted them therein and there is nothing of your other affairs that goes on anything slowly but your books . . . Your lark sings still merrily and the knight's setting dog, parrot, and dwarf are in health. I must humbly take my leave."

"*Bibliothecarius, Amanuensis, Famulusque!* A jewel of a man," Mr. Keynes adds. "The Knight" to whom belonged the setting dog, parrot and dwarf was Evelyn's father-in-law, Sir Richard Browne, who was also a collector of books. Evelyn afterwards "preferred Richard Hoare to the Prerogative Office." No one would be surprised if a man who gave so much care and thought to book-collecting did nothing else, yet this was only one of Evelyn's minor "impertinences."

On his visits to country houses, after he has made his comment on the garden, he generally has a word to say about the library. Evelyn, with regard to books—as indeed in most of his pursuits—had none of the characteristics of the recluse or selfish collector, who wants to keep to himself the advantages of his knowledge. It was he who encouraged Dr. Tenison, Rector of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields (subsequently Archbishop of Canterbury), to erect the first public library in London; and with Sir Christopher Wren

he was consulted about the placing and structure of this "worthy and laudable design."

"He told me there were thirty or forty young men in orders in his parish, either governors to young gentlemen or chaplains to noblemen, who being reproved by him on occasion for frequenting taverns or coffee-houses, told him they would study or employ their time better if they had books. This put the pious doctor on this design; and indeed a great reproach it is that so great a city as London should not have a public library becoming it."

The Library was erected in Castle Street, St. Martin's Lane.

So far as play-acting was concerned Evelyn was not much tempted. This may partly be accounted for by the fact that, except when he was staying in London, an evening at the theatre would have prevented him from returning to Deptford till very late. But there was a more fundamental reason than this. Evelyn really disapproved of the Restoration theatre (unlike Pepys, who had an overmastering passion for going to the play). In a letter to Lord Cornbury in 1665, he suggests that Parliament should prohibit plays during Lent, or reduce the number of performances as in Paris and Rome. In London he complains "the ladies and the gallants come reeking from the play late on Saturday night to their Sunday devotions; and the ideas of the farce possess their fancies to the infinite prejudice of devotion. . . . Plays are now become with us a licentious excess and a vice and need severe censors that should look as well to their

morality as to their lines and numbers."

In 1666 he explains that he very seldom went to the public theatre "now as they were abused to an atheistical liberty, foul and indecent women now (and never till now) permitted to appear and act who inflaming several young noblemen and gallants became their misses and to some their wives," and he adds, "I did not approve of any such pastime in a time of such judgments and calamities."

Most of the plays he attended were performed at Court. His remarks when he makes any are seldom complimentary. When he sees *Hamlet* in 1661, the only Shakespeare play he mentions, he writes: "But now the old plays began to disgust this refined age since His Majesty's being so long abroad." *The Widow* he describes as "a lewd play"; several others he just mentions by name. *The Adventures of Five Hours*, by Tuke, "took universally," and he has a remark about the rich scenery in *The Indian Queen*. *Horace*, by Mrs. Phillips, he sees twice. In Dryden's *Conquest of Granada* he admires "the glorious scenes and perspectives," but of *The Evening Lover* (*An Evening's Love*, by Dryden) he writes: "a foolish plot and very profane; it afflicted me to see how the stage was degenerated and polluted by the licentious times."

This was in 1668, and after that there is no record of his seeing any other play. But in January, 1673-4, he attends the first Italian opera, music combined with acting having begun with Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes* in 1662, at which he was present. Although Evelyn may not have seen many plays he tried to

write them as we know. But there is nothing to show that he had any fine taste for literature. His only reference to Milton is "that Milton who wrote for the *Regicides*."

For music he had a great appreciation, and his remarks in this connection are often enthusiastic. In an early entry he records having studied the rudiments of music, "in which I afterwards arrived at some formal knowledge, though to small perfection of hand, because I was so frequently diverted by inclinations to newer trifles." He had learned the Theorbo (a large lute with two necks) at Padua and he could play the lute. When he is invited to hear the violinist Lubicer he cannot contain his enthusiasm at the "ravishing sweetness of his playing," "he played on the single instrument a full concert, so as the rest flung down their instruments acknowledging the victory . . . I stand to this hour amazed that God should give so great perfection to so young a person." He admires the playing of the Irish harp by Mr. Clark, "a discreet gentleman born in Derbyshire," and does not think Sir Edward Sutton, although he played excellently, was up to Clark's level. Later, Signor Nicholao's violin struck all dumb at a party, where there was also a great player of the harpsichord, and also Mrs. Knight, "who sang incomparably and doubtless has the greatest reach of any Englishwoman." Mr. Slingsby, the master of the Mint, held these concerts at his house, and Evelyn has a real feast one evening when he and his wife hear a Frenchman on the lute, an Italian on the harp-

sichord, Nicholao again on the violin and a German on the *viol d'amore*. Mr. Avell was sent by Charles II to cultivate his voice in Italy. He had a famous treble voice and Evelyn says he "could have sworn it had been a woman's" when he heard him. Mary Evelyn accompanies her father one evening to a party given by Lord Arundel of Wardour. There was singing and playing on the harpsichord, and Mary sang "to the great satisfaction of both the masters and a world of people of quality present," and she performed again at Lord Rochester's, where a French boy sang, and Mrs. Packer, who sang too loud. No woman, he thinks, had a stronger voice "could she possibly have governed it. She would do rarely in a large church among the nuns." Evelyn also invited musicians to perform in his own house; indeed, he sought music and greatly enjoyed it, although it will be noticed that it is the executants rather than the music itself which he praises. A letter from Nicholas Lanier the composer\* shows that he had set some verses of Evelyn's to music. The song, however, has disappeared.

In the realm of architecture it was Evelyn's taste and experiences from foreign travel which were of value rather than any expert technical knowledge of structure; and whether it was the new St. Paul's, or the great new hospitals at Greenwich and Chelsea which were under discussion, his advice was sought. He was himself a draughtsman and some of his Italian drawings were etched.

\*British Museum. Add. MSS., 1585.

The numberless occasions on which he writes of pictures, statues, miniatures, wood-carving, jewels and curiosities show his special knowledge, good taste and keen interest. Whether it be in the museums and galleries abroad, or in the great country houses in England, or during the three or four days he spent "locked up, and alone" among the books and curiosities in the library at Whitehall, his delight in such things, and his really highly developed artistic and æsthetic appreciation are very marked.

The ingenious appealed to him, and although he was no inventor himself, he was ever ready with encouragement for new industries and inventions, whether it was paper-making at Byfleet, Sir William Petty's double-bottomed ship or Sir Richard Bulkeley's chariot. His description of the latter will hardly impress a modern motorist. However bad the road the chariot could not be overthrown. Like a tank, that was its chief merit. But

"there were some inconveniences yet to be remedied—it would not contain more than one person; was ready to take fire every ten miles; and being placed and playing on no fewer than ten rollers it made a most prodigious noise, almost intolerable."

Evelyn was something of an ornithologist, as can be gathered from his remarks about the birds in St. James's Park. He is specially interested in the pelicans (still there to-day), which he describes as "a fowl between a stork and a swan; a melancholy water-fowl brought from Astrakan by the Russian

Ambassador." He had an aviary of his own in the gardens of Sayes Court, and notes with amusement when the Marquis of Argyle mistakes turtle doves for owls.

From his *Numismata*\* it may seem that Evelyn had made a special study of coins and medals. He had studied chemistry in his youth. He wrote "An Exact Account of making Marbled Paper." Astronomy often occupied his attention, combined as it often was in those days with the superstitions of astrology. The meteor of 1681 he observes with apprehension; he remembers seeing one before the trial of Strafford in 1640. "We have had of late several comets," he adds, "which though I believe appear from natural causes and of themselves operate not, yet I cannot despise them. They may be warnings from God as they commonly are forerunners of his animadversions."

With horticulture, botany, arboriculture, literature, theology, poetry, philology, mathematics, music, book-collecting, painting, engraving, sculpture, numismatics, chemistry and astronomy the range of Evelyn's interests and occupations is by no means completely covered. Among the papers and notes from his library, which are now in the British Museum, there is a chapter on Metaphysics and a paper on the Art of Stenography, extracts, notes, tables, lists on historical geographical subjects, on Greek grammar, on English grammar, and some leaves of a letter or paper on marital relations and sexual intercourse.

Many instances might be given to show how unlike

\*See page 236.

he was to the usual expert, who is generally unable to display the smallest interest in a subject which lies outside the narrow sphere of his intensive studies. Evelyn on the contrary had a zeal for all knowledge and an enthusiasm for excellence and perfection, even when it was manifested in ways quite strange to him. To the varied pursuits which caused him so much pleasure were added onerous duties, not only of an official character, but duties which were undertaken privately to help friends. He was a trustee for Lord Mordaunt, and took much trouble in looking after Lord Berkeley's affairs.

The centre of intellectual and scientific activity, The Royal Society, of which Evelyn was one of the early and most distinguished members, began its formal meetings in Gresham College in 1660 under the chairmanship of Sir Robert Moray. In the following year it was officially incorporated, and Lord Brouncker was appointed first President under the Charter. Charles II, who encouraged the formation of the Society, became a member himself, and granted them the use of the royal arms and presented them with a silver gilt mace. Robert Boyle and Christopher Wren were among the original members as well as Evelyn, who was elected while it was still known as the Philosophic Society in 1661. The name "Royal Society" was given to it by Evelyn in his dedicatory Epistle, to his translation of Gabriel Naudé's *Avis pour dresser une Bibliothèque*. For this he was formally thanked by the Society.

## INTERESTS AND OCCUPATIONS

The attention of the society was drawn to every sort of scientific subject; papers were read, there were discussions, and experiments were sometimes carried out. The King took a practical interest in its proceedings; he had a laboratory of his own, had a practical knowledge of shipbuilding, and attended on the astronomical evenings. Evelyn was elected a member of the Council and assisted in drawing up its statutes. He was brought into close contact with the members, and apart from the meetings he dined with Brouncker, Moray and others in order to discuss scientific questions. On the anniversary of this incorporation being St. Andrew's day "each fellow wore a St. Andrew's cross of ribbon on the crown of his hat," and the King sent them venison. After the fire the Society met at Arundel House in the Strand, and Mr. Howard (afterwards Duke of Norfolk) bestowed on the Society his magnificent library\* largely collected by his grandfather, the second Earl of Arundel. Evelyn, writing of this presentation, says: "This gentleman had so little inclination to books, that it was the preservation of them from embezzlement." In the same year (1667) Evelyn found valuable marbles "miserably neglected" in Arundel House and garden, and he succeeded in persuading Mr. Howard to bestow them on Oxford University. In his letter to Howard describing how the marbles are in danger of perishing he says: "Methinks, whilst they remain thus obscured and neglected, the very marbles are become vocal and cry to you for pity and

\*Now in the British Museum.

that you should even breath life into them." Howard acquiesced, and the gratitude of the University was formally expressed very properly to Evelyn, who had been instrumental in effecting this presentation. He, however, insisted on their thanks being addressed to Mr. Howard, and this compliment was also "handsomely performed" by four Doctors of the University.

Evelyn attended the St. Andrew's day dinner of the Society for thirty-five years without a break,\* and his attendance at the Society's meetings was also pretty regular, as he notes a number of subjects which came under discussion: the horn of a fish sent by the King which struck a dangerous hole in the keel of a ship, and which, being broken off and left in the timber, prevented the vessel from foundering; an elaborate harpsichord with mechanical contrivances attached to it; Sir William Petty's double-bottomed ship, a model of which was presented to the Society; on other occasions there were experiments with magnets and experiments with regard to earthquakes. When the eccentric Duchess of Newcastle paid them a visit Pepys was there, and from him we learn that: "Several fine experiments were shown her of colours, loadstones, microscopes and of liquors; among others of one that did while she was there turn a piece of roasted mutton into pure blood which was very rare." It may be seen therefore that their range was wide, although as yet their knowledge may not have been very profound.

\*Letter to Pepys. December 3rd, 1696.

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Evelyn's interest in and patronage of the Society were shown in a number of practical ways. He presented a Tables of Veins, Arteries and Nerves to them which he had purchased years before in Padua; he subscribed 50,000 bricks towards building a college for the Society at Arundel House; he read to them his discourse *Of Earth and Vegetation* in 1662. This is *Sylva*, which must have been delivered to them in a very much abbreviated form, as it was not actually published till two years later. But the book was the first work which was printed by order of the Society. In 1665 he read a paper which he called *Panificium*,\* or "the several manners of making bread in France, where by general consent the best bread is eaten." Writing from Sayes Court (23rd February, 1669-70) to the President, Lord Brouncker, he sends not only a description of the use of the "Spanish sembrador or new Engine for ploughing, equal sowing and harrowing at once," but the machine itself which had been forwarded to him by Lord Sandwich, at that time British Ambassador in Spain. He asks that the papers may be read and the instrument exposed "to their examination and trial." "There are many gentlemen," he adds, "who will not be offended with these *rusticities*." He refers to other "polite notices and particulars of Spain," which the Ambassador has brought home, and ends with a beautifully turned compliment to the President:

\*Mentioned in a letter of Pepys's, March 1st, 1664-5.

"It is to me a shining example of both your Lordship's happy talents and great comprehension that in the throng of so many and so weighty employments, you can think of cultivating the arts and of doubly obliging your country. How do such persons enamel their characters and adorn their titles with lasting and permanent honours."

In 1673, Evelyn was appointed Secretary of the Society, but in 1691 and again in 1694, although "much opportuned," he declined the office of President, which was then filled by Sir Robert Southwell.

Evelyn's opinion of the Society is best shown by the terms in which he refers to it, when he writes to Abraham Cowley pressing him to compose an Ode.

"... you are capable to show how they have laid solid foundations to perfect all noble arts, and reform all imperfect sciences. It requires an history to recite only the arts, the inventions, and phenomena already absolved, improved, or opened. In a word, our registers have outdone Pliny, Porta, and Alexis, and all the experimentists, nay, the great Verulam himself, and have made a nobler and more faithful collection of real secrets, useful and instructive, than has hitherto been shown—Sir, we have a library, a repository, and an assembly of as worthy and great persons as the world has any; and yet we are sometimes the subject of satire and the songs of the drunkards; have a king to our founder, and yet want a Maccenas; and above all, a spirit like yours, to raise us up benefactors, and to compel them to think the design of the Royal Society as worthy of their regards, and as capable to embalm their names, as

the most heroic enterprise, or anything antiquity has celebrated; and I am even amazed at the wretchedness of this age that acknowledges it no more. . . . But you have numbers and charms that can bind even these spirits of darkness, and render their instruments obsequious; and we know you have a divine hymn for us; the lustre of the Royal Society calls for an ode from the best of poets upon the noblest argument."

His indignation at the attacks which one Henry Stubbe had levelled against the Society is expressed in a very lively way in a letter to the Rev. Joseph Glanville (24th June, 1668), where he writes:

"I do not conceive why the Royal Society should any more concern themselves for the empty and malicious cavils of these delators, after what you have said; but let the moon-dogs bark on, till their throats are dry: the Society every day emerges, and her good genius will raise up one or other to judge and defend her; whilst there is nothing which does more to confirm me in the nobleness of the design, than this spirit of contradiction which the devil (who hates all discoveries of those false and prestigious ways that have hitherto obtained) does incite to stir up men against it."

Evelyn's great activity and vitality were made possible by his physical constitution. References to his health occur more in his letters than in his Diary. The few attacks of ague he records were not serious; in fact, there is only one entry in which he displays any great concern about his health, and by the way

he writes he shows that the occasion was exceptional. It was when he was sixty-two.

"Having had several violent fits of an ague, recourse was had to bathing my legs in milk up to the knees, made as hot as I could endure it, and sitting so in it in a deep churn, or vessel, covered with blankets, and drinking *carduus* posset, then going to bed and sweating, I not only missed that expected fit, but had no more, only continued weak, that I could not go to church till Ash Wednesday, which I had not missed, I think, so long in twenty years, so gracious had God been to me.

After this warning and admonition, I now began to look over and methodise all my writings, accounts, letters, papers; inventoried the goods, and other articles of the house, and put things into the best order I could, and made my will; that now, growing in years, I might have none of these secular things and concerns to distract me, when it should please Almighty God to call me from this transitory life. With this, I prepared some special meditations and devotions for the time of sickness. The Lord Jesus grant them to be salutary for my acceptance!"

His contemporary, Ashmole, the antiquary, adopted a different expedient for dealing with his ague. He says in his diary that he hung three spiders round his neck and it cured him. Many diarists enlarge on their symptoms, specially daily writers who are interested in their ailments, which loom large as they write. John Baker, an eighteenth-century Sussex barrister, wrote long and elaborate health notes describing his symptoms as well as the astonishing

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cures he adopted. But Evelyn was neither morbid nor introspective; he had not even the reflective temperament which can so rarely be profitably used. He was healthy and normal, and his enormous energy was happily supplemented by his versatility. Versatility such as he possessed in a remarkable degree may have prevented life-long and specialised concentration on one subject. He may be accused of having dissipated his talents over too wide a field. He was, perhaps, restless. His astonishing vigour never slackened as the years advanced. He travelled about a great deal, but his journeys and visits always had a purpose and travelling was very different from what it is to-day. He had not the modern temptation to move just for moving's sake, a purely time-wasting pursuit. His researches and occupations cannot be described as amateur smattering in a number of hobbies. He dug deep, he mastered his subjects sufficiently to be able to discourse and write about them with full knowledge—though he never wanted to set himself up as a great authority. He mentions several of his contemporaries who had very varied interests, notably Sir Francis Prujean, the President of the College of Physicians, who, besides being a doctor, was a carpenter, a mechanic, a collector of pictures and a musician who played on a strange instrument called the "polythore."

Two notable instances of versatility may be found in Sir Thomas Browne, Evelyn's contemporary, and in Bacon of a preceding generation, the one a physician, the other a lawyer. Both of these showed a

keen perception of wider fields than those in which their professions obliged them to specialise. Both of them used their pen to give information to record opinions or to provoke discussion on a multitude of literary, historical, scientific and philosophical subjects as well as on social habits, traditions and superstitions. Many cases indeed could be quoted of men and women who have excelled in one particular line, having a large range of considerable knowledge in other branches of science and art.

The advantages of such versatility are three-fold. Life is very much more complete to the man whose vision can reach beyond the walls of his own garden. The man who touches life at many points derives from this larger horizon a good sense of proportion which must be of inestimable value to him in whatever profession occupies his main energies. While, for the narrower specialist, reaction from his concentration must be difficult to provide for, and inevitable disinclination for work becomes an annoyance, the man of varied interests has so many outlets for his energy, and so many occupations to fit in with his changing moods or circumstances, that his relaxation will take the profitable form of resting his thoughts by turning his mind into different channels, and so never wasting a moment of the priceless gift of time.

Among Evelyn's manuscripts was found a paper entitled *Rules for spending my pretious tyme well*. It is certain that he never wasted an hour of his life.

## CHAPTER V

### EVELYN'S FRIENDS

THE temptation to enlarge on the qualities and careers of the friends with whom Evelyn associated and corresponded must be resisted. The side issues opened by the impressive list of men and women who sought his advice or were approached by him for information on the many subjects which occupied his mind, are too many, and, if pursued, would lead too far away from the main purpose of this book. But there are several ways of seeing a man. One way is of course through his works or his diary, but perhaps also as good a sight of him as any may be obtained through his friends, not only what they thought of him but what he thought of them. More or less within these limits therefore some of the more noteworthy figures of his acquaintance may give illuminating sidelights.

The most eminent of his friends was also one of the closest. What actually brought Jeremy Taylor and John Evelyn together is not clear; but that a close sympathy should have grown up between them was very natural. It was during the Commonwealth that their intercourse ripened. Evelyn, in despair at the persecution of the Church, eagerly welcomed the "excellent preacher" who fearlessly and with com-

plete disregard for his personal safety propounded from the pulpit and in books the principles to which he adhered. Jeremy Taylor was no negligible figure. The eloquence of his spoken words and the magnificent and persuasive style of his writing made so wide an appeal that his far-reaching influence had to be reckoned with. The first letter which is preserved of their affectionate correspondence was written in February, 1654-5, after Jeremy Taylor had been imprisoned (not for the first time) in consequence of an attack on the Puritan preachers in the preface to his collection of prayers called the *Golden Grove*. In this letter Evelyn writes:

“ . . . you, sir, who have furnished the world with so rare precepts, against the efforts of all secular disasters whatsoever, could never be destitute of those consolations, which you have so charitably and piously prescribed unto others. Yea, rather, this has turned to our immense advantage, nor less to your glory, whilst men behold you living your own institutions, and preaching to us as effectually in your chains as in the chair, in the prison as in the pulpit. . . .”

In another letter about the same time in which he laments the persecutions and “declension of piety,” Evelyn expresses pleasure that Taylor is writing more: “that you have so happily fortified that battery; and I doubt not you will maintain the siege.” In a very cordial reply Jeremy Taylor tells him he is at work on *Cases of Conscience*, and at a later date Evelyn visits him and examines the manuscript.

In the Diary (March 18, 1655) Evelyn notes one of his visits to Taylor "to confer with him about some spiritual matters using him thenceforward as my ghostly father." This indeed was their relationship. Evelyn was seven years younger than his friend and revered him as a spiritual adviser with whom in doctrine, in morals and indeed in politics he was in complete accord. Several visits are noted and he entertains the great Divine at Sayes Court.\* The passage in Evelyn's letter inviting him is self-revealing, and once more shows the conflict in the mind of the host of Sayes Court between a life of retirement and a life of public activity.

" . . . it were fitting you did see how I live when I am by myself, who cannot but pronounce me guilty of many vanities, deprehending me (as you did) at a time when I was to gratify so many curious persons, to whom I had been greatly obliged, and for whom I have much value. I suppose you think me very happy in these outward things; really, I take so little satisfaction in them, that the censure of singularity would no way affright me from embracing an hermitage, if I found that they did in the least distract my thoughts from better things; or that I did not take more pleasure and incomparable felicity in that intercourse which it pleases God to permit me, in vouchsafing so unworthy a person to prostrate himself before Him, and contemplate His goodness. These are indeed gay things, and men esteem me happy. . . . My condition is too well; and I do as often wonder at it, as suspect and fear it; and yet I think I am not to do any rash or indiscreet action, to make the

\*See page 49.

world take notice of my singularity; though I do with all my heart wish for more solitude, who was ever most averse from being near a great city, designed against it, and yet it was my fortune to pitch here, more out of necessity, and for the benefit of others, than choice, or the least inclination of my own. But, sir, I will trouble you no farther with these trifles, though as to my confessor I speak them."

The correspondence on Evelyn's translation of Lucretius and on the loss of his children is noted elsewhere. A passage in one of Jeremy Taylor's letters (May 15, 1657) may be quoted to illustrate the degree of affectionate intimacy that had grown up between the ecclesiastic and the layman, also to show that high esteem was not all on one side.

" . . . sir, you are too kind to me, and oblige me not only beyond my merit, but beyond my modesty. I only can love you, and honour you, and pray for you, and in all this I can not say but that I am behind with you, for I have found so great effluxes of all your worthinesses and charities, that I am a debtor for your prayers, for the comfort of your letters, for the charity of your hand, and the affections of your heart. . . ."

There is an invitation asking Taylor to come and christen Evelyn's son, George, in 1657, on which occasion a coach was to be sent for him after dinner. "You are not to expose yourself to the casualties of the tides." The usual way to Deptford was evidently by river.

It is impossible to enter into the religious metaphysics discussed by these two correspondents. In a long letter Taylor enlarges on the immortality of the soul, and the point of dispute which Evelyn had raised was the fate of the soul in the interval between death and the day of judgment. As may be imagined, the great theologian had much to say on the subject. In other letters he urges Evelyn to write more, and specially looks forward to his *Elysium Britannicum*, which he would prefer to be called *Paradisus*. This book, however, was unfortunately never completed. He commends Evelyn's *Apology for the Royal Party*. "The materials are worthy, and the dress is clean, and orderly and beauteous; and I wish all men in the nation were obliged to read it twice."

In 1657, Jeremy Taylor was committed to the Tower because his bookseller, Royston, had placed before his collection of Offices the picture of Christ praying, contrary to the provisions of a new Act concerning "scandalous pictures." Evelyn sends a letter to the Lieutenant of the Tower in order to reconcile to his good opinion a person "who has deserved so well and I think is so innocent." He attributes the mistake to the printer, and asks that Jeremy Taylor may be accorded a personal interview to explain matters.

In two or three letters Jeremy Taylor includes in his expression of gratitude references to "your bounty to me," "your kindness in taking care of me," and uses the word "pension." This refers to a pension paid to Taylor in instalments by Evelyn.

Characteristically there is no mention of it in Evelyn's letters or any record of it in his diary.

The last letter preserved from Taylor is dated 16th November, 1661, after Charles II had given him his appointment of Bishop of Down and Connor, and is so cordial in tone, so solicitous of Evelyn's welfare and so sincere in admiration of his excellence that it is unlikely that it was the last of the correspondence between these close friends, although they were now separated by a considerable distance. Taylor died six years later at Lismore. It is undoubtedly a high tribute to Evelyn that such a man should have valued his friendship and recognised so fully his qualities.

His veneration for Jeremy Taylor was religious. His veneration for Robert Boyle was scientific. The correspondence with the two is concurrent. Evelyn and Boyle, both being Fellows of the Royal Society, met constantly, and various scientific experiments were carried out by "that excellent person and great philosopher." Their correspondence is mainly on scientific subjects ranging from the essence of roses to varnish. But there are two long letters from Evelyn which deserve special notice, both written in 1659. In the first he enlarges on an elaborate scheme he had drawn up for the erection of a Philosophic and Mathematical College. The institution was to be run on conventual lines and the inmates were to live by a rigid rule. He and his wife were to live there in separate apartments. There was to be a chapel as well as refectory, library, and cells, and

every minute detail of the servants' quarters of the stables and outhouses is given, together with their cost, and the functions described of the chaplain, of "the ancient woman to dress the meat," and of each person who was to assist. Of course there was to be a garden, indeed, a physic garden, a kitchen garden, an orchard, an olitory garden, a conservatory, a bowling green and various other enrichments of the surroundings which he knew well how to describe. Here were to assemble "some small number together who would resign themselves to live profitably and sweetly together."

Oliver Cromwell having died not many months previously, the state of public confusion and the hopes of the restoration of the King occupied public attention to the exclusion of all else. Even Evelyn's attention was distracted from the mathematical college, of which nothing more was heard. His elaboration of this scheme is a striking instance of his power of detachment in the midst of the disturbing turmoil of public events.

The second letter concerns Robert Boyle's book on *Seraphic Love*, which Evelyn saw before its publication in 1660. He writes that it "is indited with a pen snatched from the wing of a seraphim." He defends conjugal felicity with a wealth of instances and quotations. But he pauses in his argument to say: "But, dear sir, mistake me not all this while, for I make not this recital as finding the least period in your most excellent discourse prejudicial to the conjugal state; or that I have the vanity to imagine

my forces capable to render you a proselyte of Hymen's, who have already made the worthiest choice; much less to magnify my own condition, and lay little snares for those obvious replies which return in compliments and odious flatteries." Evelyn thought Boyle had paid court to the Earl of Monmouth's daughter and that his passion inspired the essay. But in 1648 Boyle had said, "he hath never yet been hurt by Cupid."

Boyle died in 1691 and William Wotton ("an extraordinary learned young man" who "preached excellently") was entrusted by Evelyn with the task of writing his *Life*, and there is a good deal of correspondence between them on the project, Evelyn furnishing him with many particulars of the man who had honoured him "with his particular esteem, now very near forty years." "To draw a just character of him," he says, "one must run through all the virtues as well as through all the sciences." Wotton did not accomplish his task, but his material was used by Birch in his book on Boyle's writings published in 1744.

Evelyn selected Richard Bentley, the scholar and critic, who was at the time chaplain to Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, to deliver the first course of Boyle lectures. The subject he chose was a confutation of atheism. He came to Sayes Court to ask whether his lecture should be printed. "I took this as a civility," writes Evelyn, "and earnestly desired it should be printed as one of the most learned and convincing discourses I had ever heard."

In a letter to Bentley on January 20th, 1696-7, Evelyn writes about the fourth reprint of *Sylva*, and recalls the circumstances in which he occupied himself in first writing the book:

"I confess I am foolishly fond of these and other rustications which had been my sweet diversions during the days of destruction and devastation both of woods and buildings whilst the rebellion lasted so long in this nation."

He also writes to Bentley about his project of the erection of a library in St. James's Park, and tells him that Sir Cyril Wyche is "altogether transported with it and thinks the project so discreetly contrived that it cannot miscarry." Apparently, however, it did miscarry.

Evelyn's correspondence shows that he entered into communication with his acquaintances often on the subject of their books or his own books. How he found time to write letters of such immense length is to be wondered at.

Sir Edward Thurland, one of the Barons of the Exchequer, was another friend. A letter to him (25th April, 1652) shows Evelyn in an elaborately facetious mood because he had received an official summons for his court at Warley, signed by Thurland in an almost illegible hand. Therefore, he says, he took "the boldness to write a new warrant in the most ill-favoured character I could that it might be more like to your fair hand." But it is Thurland's "Diatribes concerning prayer" which produces an

epistle that would seem to be the high-water mark of pedantry. In it Evelyn refers to Trismegistus, Cicero, Augustine, Socrates, Selden, Lactantius, Clemens, Josephus, Eusebius, Proclus, Iamblichus, Justin Martyr, Aquinas, Grotius, Valesius and Salmasius amongst others, and no doubt he had read them all. He also indulges in some criticism as to the construction of Thurland's argument.

A more readable letter is addressed by Evelyn to Thurland in 1658. It concerns the choice of a tutor to go abroad with Lord Percy. He gives warning against "Governors, being for the greatest ingredient a pedantic sort of scholars, infinitely uninstructed for such an employment." He recommends a suitable person "of honour, address in Court, rare erudition, languages and credit," and declares:

"the education of most of our nobility abroad (with a pedant) makes them return (I pronounce it with a blush) insolent and ignorant, debauched and without the least tincture of those advantages to be hoped for through the prudent conduct of some man of brave parts sober, active and of universal address. . . .

It is not enough that persons of my Lord Percy's quality be taught to dance, and to ride, to speak languages and wear his clothes with a good grace (which are the very shells of travel) but, besides all these, that he know men, customs, courts and disciplines and whatsoever superior excellencies the places afford, befitting a person of birth and noble impressions."

He seems to have been appealed to more than once

to recommend a tutor. He suggests Dr. Croone to travel with Henry Howard's children (1663); and Sir John Langham, knowing Evelyn to be the greatest judge of "learning and behaviour," and seeking a tutor who amongst other accomplishments should speak "ready and refined Latin," inquires as to the capacities of Mr. Philips, whom Evelyn had employed in his house, "which hath long been venerated as the holiest temple of all virtue and ingenuity." Evelyn recommends Philips, who was at that time with Lord Pembroke at Wilton, although he admits that he had not observed in him "any great promptness of readily speaking Latin."

When he himself required a tutor for his "most ingenious and pregnant" son, John, in 1665, it was to Dr. Christopher Wren to whom he applied. He wishes that the preceptor

" . . . may not be a morose, or severe person, but of an agreeable temper. The qualities I require are, that he may be a perfect Grecian, and if more than vulgarly mathematical, so much the more accomplished for my design; mine own defects in the Greek tongue, and knowledge of its usefulness, obliges me to mention that particular with an extraordinary note; in sum I would have him as well furnished as might be for the laying of a permanent and solid foundation; the boy is capable beyond his years; and if you encounter one thus qualified, I shall receive it amongst the great good fortunes of my life that I obtained it by the benefit of your friendship, for which I have ever had so perfect an esteem."

This letter is the only existing fragment of correspondence between them. But the Diary is filled with references which show that Evelyn had constant intercourse both public and private with the great architect. When Wren was only a scholar at Oxford, Evelyn refers to him as "the miracle of a youth," and "a prodigious young scholar." He stood as godfather to Wren's son and was constantly in touch with him in connection with the rebuilding of London, the foundation of Greenwich Hospital, and many other projects and activities. When Wren was at work on St. Paul's and the fifty other city churches, Evelyn in his enthusiasm writes "a wonderful genius had this incomparable person." Wren survived Evelyn by many years, dying in 1723 at the age of ninety-one.

It was over his history of the Dutch war that Evelyn first became acquainted with Sir Thomas Clifford, and much correspondence on this subject passed between them. Clifford held several posts in the household of Charles II, and was made a peer and Lord Treasurer in 1672. Being a Catholic he refused to conform to the Test Act, and was obliged to resign. Evelyn's very high regard for this statesman is expressed in the Diary more than in the correspondence. In one passage he refers to Clifford as "ever my noble friend, a valiant and daring person, but by no means fit for a supple and flattering courtier." He strongly criticises Clifford's action in shutting up the Exchequer and robbing the banks. But when he was deposed from the office of Lord

Treasurer Evelyn visited him at Tunbridge Wells, where Clifford in a distraught state of mind kept him for several days. In a very long entry under the date of August 18th, 1673, he describes how he went to say good-bye to Clifford at Wallingford House. He relates how Clifford had risen to the high post he occupied and the grave mistakes he had made. "For the rest," he adds, "my Lord Clifford was a valiant uncorrupt gentleman, ambitious, not covetous; generous, passionate a most constant sincere friend to me in particular." He goes on to describe Clifford's last words to him and his tragic death, when his servant found that he had "strangled himself with his cravat upon the bed-tester." Then follow stories of how Clifford, after consulting his horoscope, had expected a rapid fall from power and a violent end. There is a certain generosity in Evelyn's attitude towards a man who was a Catholic and who, as a member of the notorious Cabal ministry, was far from exemplary in public life.

For Lord Chancellor Clarendon, Evelyn had a deep admiration, and was greatly honoured when he came to visit him at Sayes Court in 1662 with his wife and with "his purse and his mace borne before him." They were "collationed" and "were very merry," and Evelyn then made the acquaintance of his son, Lord Cornbury, who became a close friend. Two years later he stayed at Cornbury to assist in planting the park, and made visits in the neighbourhood, staying at Oxford, where Cornbury was entertained as son of the Chancellor of the University.

They visited several of the buildings, and at All Souls, although Evelyn admired the large fresco over the altar, he thought it seemed "too full of naked for a chapel."

There is a high religious and moral tone in Evelyn's letters to Cornbury. In one dated February 1664-5 he refers to Lord Clarendon's loss of his son, Edward. He says that besides the divine precepts he has found consolation in Epictetus. "I never go abroad without it in my pocket," "I know, my Lord, you employ your retirements nobly; wear this defensive for my sake, I had almost said this Christian office." He deplores the condition of the Church and makes proposals about theatres in Lent. He ends with a fervid eulogy of Clarendon, saying he is ready to profess that "I have found more tenderness and greater humanity from the influences of his Lordship than from all the relations I have now in the world, wherein yet I have many dear and worthy friends." In his letter of June, 1665, he gives Cornbury a list of books which he recommends as worthy and instructive. A stiffer course of reading can hardly be imagined. In an unscholared age the very names of most of the authors will be unknown. Who now reads Zosimus, Procopius, Agathinus, Philostratus, Eunapius, or Lampridius? And he rightly concludes, "by the time your Lordship is arrived thus far, you will have performed more than any man of your quality can pretend to in Court, by immense degrees, according to my weak observation, who sometimes pass my time at the circle where the gallants produce them-

selves with all their advantages and (God knows) small furniture."

His very severe trials in his work for the Prisoners are enlarged on by Evelyn in a letter written in September of the same year, and he pleads that his request for more money may be laid before Lord Clarendon. "I am a plain country gentleman," he writes, "yet hear and see and observe, as those in the valleys best discern the mountains. This nation is ruined for want of activity on our parts; religion and gratitude on all."

Clarendon House, which was built by Pratt, is the subject of Evelyn's admiration as "the best contrived, the most useful, graceful and magnificent house in England." It was demolished not long afterwards by Sir Thomas Bond. The space is now occupied by Old Bond Street. Lord Cornbury succeeded his father as 2nd Earl of Clarendon in 1674. James II, who had married his sister, appointed him Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1686.

There is a graphic account in the Diary of Evelyn's visit to Swallowfield,\* which came into Cornbury's possession through his wife, whom Evelyn speaks of as "a most religious and virtuous lady." "Everyone was in tears" at the departure of Lord and Lady Clarendon for Ireland. A great dinner-party as a trial "of a master-cook whom Sir Stephen Fox had recommended to go with his Lordship into Ireland" was held in London, at which Evelyn was present. During his very brief tenure of office in Ireland,

\*See page 290.

Clarendon wrote to Evelyn asking him to keep an eye on the gardens at Swallowfield and thanking him for speaking to George London (the great gardener) about them. He gives some account of the state of affairs in Ireland, and refers to "a great man who storms, foams, swaggers and rants at any rate and at all sorts of people, he thinks to overturn nations and governments by his look and his wind which he finds not quite so easy as he expected." This was Tyrconnel, who was destined to succeed Clarendon within a year.

Clarendon, after taking an active part in Jacobite schemes, and after refusing to take the oath of allegiance to William III, was committed to the Tower, where Evelyn visited him. He was released after six months and spent the rest of his life in retirement collecting portraits, medals and books, which are described in one of Evelyn's letters to Pepys. Again behind this friendship we find gardens, books and other "rarities" beloved of Evelyn.

Great admiration for Anne, Countess of Sunderland is expressed in the Diary on many occasions, and especially when he visits her at Althorp in 1688. The examination of the correspondence between them shows an intimacy which seems to have made it easy for him to unburden himself and disclose his innermost thoughts not only on religious matters, but on his own personal aspirations and motives in the conduct of his life. This, and nothing more, might lead one to visualise a high-principled and enlightened lady who embodied the virtues

which Evelyn most admired and who was a supporter in the changing turmoil of public affairs of the principles with regard to Church and State which he so often maintains. But a great deal more is known of Lady Sunderland and her husband than can be gathered from these fragments.

Robert Spencer, 2nd Earl of Sunderland, has been described as the craftiest, most rapacious and most unscrupulous of all the politicians of his age. A mere catalogue of his shameless intrigues, his religious recantations and his ceaseless machinations to retain power is sufficient to show that at every stage he must have offended the religious and political susceptibilities of a man of Evelyn's views and disposition. He married Anne Digby, a rich and beautiful heiress, who is referred to as a born *intrigante* and his match in duplicity.\* She shared in his intrigues without having any squeamish scruples about marital fidelity. Only one of the episodes in their career need be cited. Sunderland renounced Protestantism to get into favour with James II. While he was serving this King, he was receiving a pension from France, and through his wife's lover, Henry Sidney (afterwards Earl of Romney), he was furnishing William of Orange with particulars about affairs in England.

How could Evelyn be attracted by such people? The answer is that Anne had a beautiful garden and was fond of reading and intellectual pursuits. This is not the only instance in which he was ready to turn

\**Dictionary of National Biography.*

a blind eye to moral and political shortcomings when gardens and books could distract his attention into another direction. Nor is it the only instance of his lack of discrimination in the judgment of character.

From 1672 onwards there are very frequent references which show his growing and close friendship with this lady. Evelyn dines with her, accompanies her on visits, she entertains him at her house, which was filled with beautiful pictures and busts. On one occasion she engages a fire-eater to amuse him after dinner, on another they have music. He goes to Althorp and stays several days, and she visits him at Sayes Court.

In 1681, having got Evelyn well under her spell—and he was quite a useful man for an intriguer to know—Lady Sunderland tries to make him go to Sir Stephen Fox and propose the marriage of her eldest son, John, Lord Spencer, to Fox's daughter. Evelyn was unwilling to undertake this mission because John Spencer's "early inclinations to extravagance made me apprehensive that I should not serve Sir Stephen by proposing it." But Anne made him go, and Sir Stephen got out of the proposal by saying "it was too great an honour," and that they must wait till she was of an age to decide for herself (she was only thirteen). Seven years later Evelyn went over from Althorp with Lady Sunderland and her daughter, Lady Arran, to the seat of Lord Northampton,\* who meanwhile had married Sir Stephen's daughter.

\*Castle Ashby.

It appears to have been an uncomfortable visit. They entertained the party from Althorp "with so little good grace and so dully that our visit was very short."

It is during this visit to Althorp in 1688 that Evelyn expresses not only his admiration of the garden but of the lady to whom it belonged, and his misgivings about Sunderland with some remarks about the children. The garden, he writes, is

"governed by a lady, who without any show of solicitude, keeps everything in such admirable order, both within and without, from the garret to the cellar, that I do not believe there is any in this nation, or in any other, that exceeds her in such exact order, without ostentation, but substantially great and noble. The meanest servant is lodged so neat and cleanly; the service at the several tables, the good order and decency—in a word, the entire economy is perfectly becoming a wise and noble person. She is one who for her distinguished esteem of me from a long and worthy friendship, I must ever honour and celebrate. I wish from my soul the Lord, her husband (whose parts and abilities are otherwise conspicuous) was as worthy of her, as by a fatal apostasy and court-ambition he has made himself unworthy! This is what she deplores, and it renders her as much affliction as a lady of great soul and much prudence is capable of. The Countess of Bristol, her mother, a grave and honourable lady, has the comfort of seeing her daughter and grandchildren under the same economy, especially Mr. Charles Spencer, a youth of extraordinary hopes, very learned for his age, and ingenious, and under a governor of great worth. Happy were it, could as

much be said of the elder brother, the Lord Spencer, who, rambling about the world, dishonours both his name and his family, adding sorrow to sorrow to a mother, who has taken all imaginable care of his education."

Evelyn was puzzled when he heard that Sunderland had fallen out of favour with James II; and when they both came to kiss William III's hand he writes frankly, "This is a mystery." Lady Sunderland may have deplored to Evelyn her husband's conduct, especially when it led to his being out of favour, but her sincerity may be doubted just as his innocence cannot. If on these visits he had taken his wife with him, Mary would probably have seen through the beautiful and charming lady's tactics. But how she would have hated the atmosphere of Althorp!

Lady Sunderland's letters which deal with political incidents of the moment are not very illuminating. One expresses satisfaction at Sunderland's appointment as Secretary of State in 1678 (this he obtained by the payment of £6,000), and in another, dealing with the impeachment of the Lord Treasurer, Danby, she remarks, "his Lordship (her husband) does yet keep the King's ear" (this he did by making up to Charles's mistresses).

Evelyn's four letters to her are much more interesting, and they are what best illustrate the cordiality of this friendship. In the first (13th December, 1667) he writes about furnishing her with a catalogue of such books as "I believed might be fit to entertain your more devout and serious hours," and he makes

an affectionate reference to her two children. The next letter which has been preserved is dated 22nd December, 1688, and gives in the opening passage as full a recital of his philosophy of life as can be found in any of his writings or letters.

“Madam,—

The busy and wondrous age I have lived in, the not altogether confinement of myself to morose conversations in the world, the tincture I early received from generous and worthy parents, and the education they gave me, disposing (at least inciting) me to the love of letters, and a great regard to religion, as the end and scope of all accomplishments, wisely and prudently considered (not that I have pursued this glorious and only happy course, to my sorrow and reproach be it confessed, but what I ought to have done), does now and has long since taken up my thoughts about that sovereign good which all the thinking part of mankind has in all ages and times been searching after, to acquiesce and rest in; and in pursuance of this great concern, I have preferred the recess of near thirty years, during which, by mean compliances, and in a vicious age, one might probably have arrived to something which they call (though not very properly) a *figure* (but I, an empty *cipher*) in the world, to all other advantages whatsoever; and upon the foot and sum of all (for I do often cast it up), I have found nothing solid, nothing stable, and worth all this hurry, disquiet, and expense of time, but the pursuit of moderate things for this life, with due and modest regard to quality, and the decent circumstances of that maintained and procurable by worthy, open, and honourable wages, in a virtuous, but to be neglected

and despised as base and ignoble, in a false and vicious age."

In the rest of the letter there is a note of admonition—almost an attempt to preach to her, which, by such expressions as "acquisitions . . . procured by low and servile arts are of no durance longer than the favourite shall prostitute his conscience," makes one wonder whether he was not making some attempt through her to check the incorrigible intrigues of her husband. He expresses sympathy with "the unexpected traverses in your present circumstances." But in his blindness or innocence or even stupidity Evelyn did not appreciate the depth of Sunderland's treachery nor his astonishing cleverness. The intimate adviser of James II had already a month before fled to Holland disguised as a woman, and after he had reverted back to Protestantism became indispensable to the new King. Anne joined her husband in Holland, visiting Evelyn at Sayes Court before she embarked.

There is a letter (25th July, 1690) of condolence on the death of the Countess of Arran, Lady Sunderland's daughter, in which Evelyn enjoins his friend to seek religious consolation. Passages from the last letter (4th August, 1690), preserved of Evelyn to Lady Sunderland, have been quoted elsewhere. In addition to his interesting account of what led him to write *Sylva* and of his desire for the post of King's forester, he refers to his *Kalendarium Hortense*, "a no-un-useful trifle" then in its eighth impression.

Before mentioning some of his other pamphlets he explains his endeavours with regard to trees and gardens in the following paragraph:

“Thus, madam, I endeavoured to do my countrymen some little service, in as natural an order as I could for the improving and adorning their estates and dwellings, and if possible, make them in love with these useful and innocent pleasures, in exchange of a wasteful and ignoble sloth which, I had observed, had so universally corrupted an ingenuous education.”

Was Lady Sunderland interested in all this? Probably she was. She did have a beautiful garden and she did read. For Evelyn this was enough.

There are a couple of letters from Evelyn to the son, Charles, Lord Spencer, who afterwards succeeded his father as third Earl of Sunderland. As a youth he had shown remarkable precocity. He was a student and a bibliophil who spent much time in forming a magnificent library at Althorp. But unfortunately he turned out in the long run almost as bad and even worse, Macaulay thinks, than his father. The letters seem to suggest that Evelyn had the direction of his studies. He writes, when the boy was fifteen, of having “tempted and sufficiently provoked your Lordship in Plautus, Cicero, Pliny, Seneca, Lipsius, etc.,” and urges him, “who are so perfect a master of the learned tongues,” to consider how he may “embellish” his own native language. The other letter written when Spencer was twenty has the note

of fawning eulogy—"I often revive myself with the meditation of your virtues" and such-like phrases. The boy was just going for a tour abroad. Evelyn did not live to watch his pupil's career.

In disregarding or turning a blind eye to the political and even moral reputation of the great people with whom he made friends as gardeners or planters, it no doubt occurred to Evelyn that the high positions they held would enable them to set an example in cultivating and beautifying their grounds which would be followed. The notable growth of interest in this respect during the later seventeenth century, although no doubt primarily due to the great gardeners of the day, was undoubtedly stimulated by Evelyn's efforts and influence.

The letters of Robert Berkeley of Spetchley to Evelyn written between 1684 and 1693 show that he was a gardening friend and an admirer, and had been entertained at Sayes Court, "your renowned villa." They concern trees and gardens, condolences on the death of Mary, Evelyn's daughter, congratulations on his appointment as commissioner of the Privy Seal, with the hope that his duties will not interfere with his "grand design" (*Elysium Britannicum*), and descriptions of gardens in Holland, especially Mr. Bentinck's garden at The Hague, to which Berkeley adds: "and note, dearest sir, after all I have said on this subject, I must tell you in justice to my own reason, and more from the sincerity of a friend, that your gardens and wilderness are much more pleasing and agreeable, being far better designed

having the advantage likewise of good gravel and finer turf (here only sand and grass walks) with greater variety of forest trees." He also writes about French gardening books, and is grateful for the vines Evelyn had sent him. None of the letters received from the man he "loved and honoured for his virtues" have been preserved.

Quotations have been given elsewhere from Evelyn's correspondence with Abraham Cowley. Their friendship was based on gardens rather than on poetry, although both were combined when the poem, which was included in the *Kalendarium Hortense*, was written by "the sweet poet whom I can never part with for his love to this delicious toil [gardening] and the honour he has done me." Cowley was often at Sayes Court and Evelyn visited him when he was ill, and was present at his funeral. Cowley was a very active royalist, so the two seem to have had a deep sympathy between them on all subjects.

A letter from Abraham Cowley, dated March 29th, 1663\*, not contained in the Evelyn Correspondence, well illustrates the charming friendship which existed between them:

"Sir,—

There is nothing more pleasant than to see kindness in a person for whom we have great esteem and respect (no not the sight of your garden in May or even the having such a one) which makes me the more obliged to return you my most humble thanks

\**English Literature* (an Illustrated Record), Vol. III, p. 73, by Edmund Gosse.

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for the testimonies I have lately received of yours both by your letter and your presents. I have already sowed such of your seeds as I thought most proper, upon a hotbed, but cannot find in all my books a catalogue of those plants which require that culture nor of such as must be set in pots, which defects and all others I hope shortly to see supplied, that as I hope to see shortly your work of Horticulture finished and published, and long to be in all things your disciple as I am in all things now.

Your most humble and  
most obedient servant,  
A. COWLEY."

By his writings on gardens and trees Evelyn attracted correspondence from a number of people. The variety of his artistic and scientific interests is also reflected in the correspondence as well as in the Diary. Thomas Barlow writes to him about "the choice pieces" he had given to the Bodleian, about his books and about prints and drawings and manuscripts. Tenison, Bishop of Lincoln, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, receives a long letter on earthquakes and their origin. There is correspondence with Lord Sandwich, the British Ambassador in Spain, on horticultural subjects. Sir Robert Southwell asks advice about holly hedges and yews, begging pardon for "the impertinences of a young planter." Evelyn thanks Francis Barlow for dedicating a plate of Titian's Venus to him, "since your affection has vanquished your reason so much to my advantage." He composes a letter of immense length to a Roman Catholic priest, the Rev. Father Patrick,

on the Church of England's doctrine concerning the Eucharist. Philip Dumaresque, having received one of Evelyn's books, relates his experiences in planting trees. Many others could be added to the list. The ingenious, the artistic, the inventors and collectors, as well as gardeners and foresters were attracted to him and wanted his advice.

Small wonder that he was drawn to such a man as the extraordinary Sir William Petty. Under the date 22nd March, 1674-5, the diarist records that he supped with Sir William and divers honourable persons. The revising pen adds to this a very long biographical sketch which exhibits Petty in perhaps a rather more favourable light than he deserves, although he certainly seems to have been something of a genius.

With Sir Stephen Fox Evelyn had both social and official relations. In the Diary he gives a short biographical sketch of this remarkable man who started as a Salisbury choir-boy, amassed a large fortune "honestly got and unenvied. With all his success he continued to be humble. He is generous and lives honourably of a sweet nature, well spoken, well bred, and is so highly in his Majesty's esteem."

As the Lord Keeper, Sir Francis North (afterwards Lord Guildford), was not only "learned," "ingenious" and "of sweet disposition," but also "very skilful in music-painting, the new philosophy and politer studies," it was only natural that Evelyn should have been attracted by him, should have visited him and dined with him. We get another glimpse of Sayes

## JOHN EVELYN

Court from the pen of Roger North, brother of Sir Francis, who describes the Lord Keeper's visit:

"His lordship was once invited to a philosophical meal at the house of Mr. Evelyn, at Deptford. The house was low, but most elegantly set off with ornaments and quaint mottoes at most turns, but above all his garden was exquisite being most boscaresque and, as it were, an exemplar of his book on forest trees. They appeared all so thriving and clean, that, in so much variety, no one could be satiated in viewing, and to these were added plenty of ingenious discourses which made time short."

Many more interesting acquaintances and friends might be added with Evelyn's comments upon them: Colonel Morley, whom Evelyn pressed in vain to anticipate Monk and come out for the King; Sir Kenelm Digby, "a teller of strange things"; the young Duchess of Grafton, "full of virtue and sweetness"; Elias Ashmole, the celebrated antiquary and collector; Wenceslaus Hollar, the eminent engraver, and a host of others. Unquestionably Evelyn was very sociable, and gathered and gave news and information most of the days of his life.

## CHAPTER VI

### EVELYN AND PEPYS

WHEN two friends both keep diaries there would seem to be a magnificent chance of finding out exactly what they thought about one another. When the two friends happen to be among the foremost British diarists, interest and expectation are further increased. Unfortunately, in the case of Evelyn and Pepys, the material for their mutual judgment of one another is, comparatively speaking, meagre. There is not one concurrent entry in their diaries; that is to say, there is not one single occasion on which their meetings or conversations with one another are recorded by both of them. This arises from the fact that Evelyn did not think his earlier meetings with Pepys worth recording. Pepys was still a nobody, and Evelyn was chiefly concerned with recording meetings and conversations with "the somebodies." His first reference to Pepys, when he takes him to his brother Richard, as an example of the successful operation for stone, Pepys bringing "the stone as big as a tennis ball to show him," occurs on June 10th, 1669. Pepys had ceased writing a diary ten days before—on May 31st, 1669.

Nevertheless Pepys had not failed to note his meetings with Evelyn in his punctual record, where

intercourse with courtiers or domestic servants is equally fully recorded, but only during nine years. In origin their friendship was official. Evelyn's post as one of the Commissioners of the sick and wounded brought him into contact with the Admiralty; and Captain Cocke, a hilarious and often drunken joker, who became Treasurer to the Commissioners, had frequent supper-parties at which both the diarists were present. In May, 1665, Pepys visited Sayes Court without meeting Evelyn. He greatly admired the garden—"a lovely and noble ground"—and later in the year they met at one of Captain Cocke's suppers. One day at Sayes Court Evelyn showed them his collection of manuscripts and gave Pepys a hundred-year-old ledger of the Navy. But all Pepys can say of the Elizabethan manuscript was: "But, Lord! how poorly, methinks, they wrote in those days and in what plain uncut paper." On September 27th he had his first good talk with Evelyn, a "most excellent discourse touching all manner of learning wherein I find him a very fine gentleman and particularly of painting in which he tells me the beautiful Mrs. Middleton is rare and his own wife do brave things."

In the following November there is an entry in Pepys's Diary which gives the most vivid written portrait of Evelyn that exists. It was a Sunday, he had been to church and after dinner went by river to Deptford:

"there made a visit to Mr. Evelyn, who, among other things showed me most excellent painting in little

in distemper, Indian ink, water colours; graveing; and above all the whole secret of mezzo-tinto and the manner of it, which is very pretty and good things done with it. He read to me very much also of his discourse he hath been many years and now is about, about gardenage; which will be a most noble and pleasant piece. He read me part of a play or two of his making, very good, but not as he conceits them, I think to be. He showed me his *Hortus Hyemalis*; leaves laid up in a book of several plants kept dry, which preserve colour, however, and look very finely, better than any herbal. In fine a most excellent person he is, and must be allowed a little for a little conceitedness; but he may well be so, being a man so much above others. He read me, though with too much gusto, some little poems of his own, that were not transcendant, yet one or two very pretty epigrams; among others, of a lady looking in at a grate [cage] and being pecked at by an eagle that was there."

Then the rude interruption from another visitor which makes the whole scene so amusing and real:

"Here comes in, in the middle of our discourse Captain Cocke, as drunk as a dog but could stand and talk and laugh. He did so enjoy himself in a brave woman that he had been with all the afternoon, and who should it be but my Lady Robinson, but very troublesome he is with his noise and talk and laughing though very pleasant."

Pepys was never infected by the fashionable habit of the day of indulging in rapturous panegyrics even

about people of whom he was fond. He always gave free play to his critical faculties, making his brief personal notes with an unsurpassed aptitude of phrase, catching the fleeting impression of the passing moment. In these few lines he summarises not only the talents but the character of the notable figure of whom he stood somewhat in awe. We have the virtuoso, the gardener, the superior intellect touched undoubtedly by some conceit and rather anxious, as we can see, to impress the Clerk of the Acts, who was all eyes and ears and far from being self-assertive. We can see, too, how Pepys detected that, remarkable as this "most excellent person" might be, he was not much of a poet. Yet Evelyn among his many talents greatly fancied his capacity for verse-making, like a mother who reserves her greatest affection for her most backward child. Pepys saw this in the excess of "gusto."

Captain Ciocke would not seem to have been the sort of man who would appeal to Evelyn's fastidious taste. But he evidently had the power of producing good cheer in his company, and in December they were very merry at a supper he gave, when they dressed a dish of fowl themselves. "Mr. Evelyn there in very good humour."

In the following year the friendship ripened, and the series of talks begin in which they discuss the evils of the times. From now on Pepys writes nothing but the highest praise of his friend, whom he finds "a most worthy person," until at last he confesses, "the more I know him the more I love him." They

drive together or pace the galleries of Whitehall or Westminster Hall deep in conversation. At a book-seller's Evelyn takes Pepys aside and talks of "the King minding nothing but his lust"; or dining with Pepys (unfortunately it was "a bad dinner") he says, "ruin is approaching" from "the folly of the King." One evening at Whitehall, Pepys was in attendance on the Duke of York. He appears to have been shocked by what he saw, and Evelyn, whom he met, seems to have coined an effective word for the goings-on. The incident is noted by Pepys in the entry of his Diary dated September 26th, 1666:

"Here I had the hap to see my Lady Denham; and at night went into the dining-room and saw several fine ladies; among others, Castlemaine, but chiefly Denham again; and the Duke of York taking her aside and talking to her in the sight of all the world, all alone; which was strange and what also I did not like. Here I met with good Mr. Evelyn who cries out against it and calls it bitchering, for the Duke of York talks a little to her, and then she goes away and then he follows her again like a dog . . . all is dead, nothing of good in any of their minds: he bemoans it, and says he fears more ruin hangs over our heads."

The longest talk recorded was on April 26th, 1667, when for two hours they walked in Westminster Hall.

According to Pepys, Evelyn must, on this occasion, have unburdened himself of an amount of gossip and scandal of which we get no inkling in any of his

written works, his diary or his letters. Pepys no doubt led him on, making mental notes the while and going home early to write it all down, because the entry is a very long one. Evelyn discoursed of the badness of the government, "where nothing but wickedness and wicked men and women command the King." He refers to Lady Byron as "the King's seventeenth whore abroad." He describes how in the court there were menial servants "lacking bread" who had not received "a farthing of wages," and he tells his absorbed companion how "the King of France hath his mistresses but laughs at the fooling of our King that makes his bastards princes and loses his revenues upon them and makes his mistresses his masters." Then comes a long and detailed bit of gossip about how Mrs. Stewart, in spite of being loaded with jewels, manages to escape from the Court without prostituting herself to the King. He ends with some anecdotes and criticism of Clifford and of Arlington.

An interesting conversation; but one thing is certain, namely, that Evelyn never for a moment suspected that it was all going to be written down. In fact he never had any idea that Pepys was a diarist. Sir William Coventry was the only man to whom Pepys confided the fact, and he regretted having done so afterwards, "it not being necessary nor may be convenient to have it known."

But it is certainly worthy of note and a good illustration of the difference of method in the two diarists that so far there is no mention whatever of

Pepys in Evelyn's record. Even on the day of the two hours' talk in Whitehall all Evelyn notes is a visit to the Lord Chancellor, who shows him his palace and library. The last mention of Evelyn by Pepys is the entry of March 16th, 1667-8, recording the dinner he gave him. The last entry of all in Pepys's Diary is on May 31st, 1669.

We must now turn to Evelyn's references to Pepys. They are mostly very scrappy, and only once or twice is there any personal comment. After taking Pepys to see his brother, Richard, who was going to have an operation for stone, he entertains "Sir Christopher Wren and Mr. Pepys, Clerk of the Acts" to dinner, and refers to them as "two extraordinary ingenious and knowing persons"—a high compliment for Pepys to be classed with Wren. When Pepys was sent to the Tower in 1679 Evelyn visited him, sent him venison and dined with him. Evelyn was no fair-weather friend. In 1682 Pepys showed him Sir Anthony Deane's book on shipbuilding, and Evelyn says, "I esteem this book an extraordinary jewel." So important did Evelyn think the revelations which Pepys showed to him after dinner on October 2nd, 1685, that he devotes a very full entry to an account of the papers he inspected. It was on this occasion that Pepys brought out the documents which James II had shown him proving that Charles II had by a written declaration renounced the Protestant religion and had died a Catholic. Evelyn was deeply moved and "heartily sorry to see" this indisputable proof of the facts.

Visits to Clapham, where Pepys was established in retirement, went on, and not many days before the great Diarist died Evelyn called, and was greatly saddened by the news of his friend's illness from smallpox.

The importance of Evelyn's obituary notice of Pepys is twofold. It is the only contemporary estimate of Pepys; and it led, when Evelyn's Diary was first published, to the eventual publication of the diary of the civil servant whose name had been forgotten.

"26th May. This day died Mr. Samuel Pepys, a very worthy, industrious and curious person, none in England exceeding him in knowledge of the navy, in which he had passed through all the most considerable offices, Clerk of the Acts and Secretary of the Admiralty, all which he performed with great integrity. When King James II went out of England, he laid down his office, and would serve no more; but withdrawing himself from all public affairs, he lived at Clapham with his partner, Mr. Hewer, formerly his clerk, in a very noble house and sweet place, where he enjoyed the fruit of his labours in great prosperity. He was universally beloved, hospitable, generous, learned in many things, skilled in music, a very great cherisher of learned men of whom he had the conversation. His library and collection of other curiosities were of the most considerable, the models of ships especially. Besides what he published of an account of the navy, as he found and left it, he had for divers years under his hand the History of the Navy, or *Navalia*, as he called it; but how far advanced, and what will follow of

his, is left, I suppose, to his sister's son, Mr. Jackson, a young gentleman, whom Mr. Pepys had educated in all sorts of useful learning, sending him to travel abroad, from whence he returned with extraordinary accomplishments, and worthy to be heir. Mr. Pepys had been for near forty years so much my particular friend, that Mr. Jackson sent me complete mourning, desiring me to be one to hold up the pall at his magnificent obsequies; but my indisposition hindered me from doing him this last office."

Although of course nothing like as good as Pepys's early estimate of Evelyn, this gives a very pleasant portrait of Pepys without any exaggeration of his talents or any pretence that he was an outstanding man of genius.

So much for the entries contained in the two diaries. But a considerable correspondence passed between them, and in their letters Evelyn is far superior to Pepys. It must be remembered that Pepys was always a little in awe of Evelyn and his great learning, that he was conscious of merely being a subordinate official, while his friend was a distinguished country gentleman. But, most of all, they show how different letter-writing is from diary-writing. Pepys succeeded as very few, if any, have in not being troubled with consciousness of any reader when he wrote his diary. In conversation with superior people he was no doubt on his guard, and with Evelyn he must have often pretended to have been shocked when he was not in the least shocked. In letters the eye of the reader governs the contents of

the letter, and with some people even the style. This was certainly the case with Pepys, who often tries to imitate the older man's rather ponderous periods, and the Diarist makes no appearance at all in the exchange of letters. It must be remembered, too, that the older post-diary Pepys was a more sober staid man than the Diarist.

When Evelyn wrote his essay on "Solitude versus Public Employment," Pepys did not write and tell Evelyn what he thought of it. But he did tell his Diary. He had been to church at St. Margaret's, Westminster, not, we fear, for the sake of his devotions. From the gallery he entertained himself with his "perspective glass up and down the church by which I had the great pleasure of seeing and gazing at a great many fine women." He then goes in his boat to Barne Elms in quest of Mrs. Martin, and on the way he read Evelyn's essay, which he had stuffed into his pocket. "In it," he writes, "I do not find excess of good matter though it be pretty for a bye discourse."

They were both Fellows of the Royal Society. Pepys indeed was at one time elected President. But the contributions to learning which each brought to that learned and august assembly differed very widely. Pepys in fact confesses in his Diary that there were "fine discourses and experiments but I do lack philosophy enough to understand them and so cannot remember them."

There was a good deal of correspondence between them about the two big books which each contem-

plated but neither succeeded in finishing. Evelyn tells him all the difficulties attending his task of writing a history of the Dutch war, and sends him a number of papers for his great book on the history of the Navy which he strongly encourages him to write. There is a letter of no less than sixteen printed pages which Evelyn wrote to Pepys, who at the time was laid up. It concerns portraits, galleries of celebrities, medals and libraries and is very heavy reading. It is impossible to imagine Pepys following the advice given in this letter—

“you will consult Fulvius Ursinus, Goltzius, Monsieur St. Amant, Otto, Dr. Spon, Vaillant, Dr. Patin and the most learned Spankemius.”

Pepys replies tactfully declaring that it will be his endeavour “to leave no syllable unpracticed of what you have had the goodness to teach me in it and lies within the reach of my pate and purse to execute.” One cannot help feeling that Evelyn, in his long letters referring to obscure authors, discoursing on the history of engraving, analysing the opinions of Philippe de Comines and describing the maxims of the Marquise de Sablé as being “thick of very noble thoughts,” was writing far above Pepys’s head or “pate” and very much over-estimating his knowledge. Yet in the middle of one of his erudite discourses he draws himself up and says, “But I forgot I am writing to one who knows all this much better.” His praise of Pepys’s disappointing little volume, which was by way of being an introduction to his

*History of the Navy*, is absurdly out of proportion. The panegyric writer gets the upper hand. He declares it is "so seasonable, so every way ingenuous, in so just, modest and generous a style; in a word so perfectly consummate is your excellent remonstrance and so incontestably vouched." Of Pepys's really good work at the Admiralty he, like everyone else, knew little or nothing. There was a consensus of opinion expressed between them on Clarendon's *Rebellion* of which both of them thought very highly. Evelyn considered it "unexpectedly well-written"; "there runs through this noble piece," he writes, "a thread so even, strong and without break or knot in the whole contexture, with such choice and profitable instructions naturally emerging from the subject, as persons of the sublimest rank and office need not be ashamed to learn their duties and how to govern themselves." In some letters domestic affairs are discussed, and Pepys takes a great interest in the grandson, John, and makes suggestion about his education and training. He writes telling Evelyn of a visit "from our pretty Etonian," but he "could not get the little knave to dine" with him.

When he is setting out from Portsmouth on his mission to Tangier in 1683, Pepys tells his friend of the circumstances which surround him and of the good humour, good cheer and good books. "But," he writes, "after all Mr. Evelyn is not here who alone would have been all this." And Evelyn in reply tells him, "you leave us naked at home." When Evelyn is out of London at a later date, Pepys urges him to

come up: "Hasten then to town where we have a whole summer crop of intelligence to gather and seed to put in the ground for another: but we want the aid of your weather wisdom towards judging what will come on't."

As the two grew older they undoubtedly became very fast friends, and when Pepys retired to Clapham Evelyn felt the loss of his company in London and of his visits to Sayes Court.

On August 29th, 1692, he writes from Wotton:

"Here is wood and water meadows and mountains the Dryads and Hamadryads; but there is no Mr. Pepys no Dr. Gale. Nothing of all the cheer in the parlour that I taste; all's insipid and all will be so to me 'til I see and enjoy you again. . . . *O Fortunate Mr. Pepys!* who knows, possesses and enjoys all that's worth seeking after. Let me live among your inclinations—I shall be happy."

Again he writes to his "worthy and constant friend": "I should never forgive myself did I not as often remember you as I do any friend I valued in the world." In a letter dated January 20th, 1702-3, he ends:

"What I could wish for myself and all I love, as I do Mr. Pepys, should be the old man's life, as described in the distich, which you have deservedly attained:

*Vita, senis libri, domus, hortus, lectus amicus,*

*Vina, nepos, ignis, mens hilaris, pietas.*

In the meantime I feed on the past conversation

I once had in York Buildings, and starve as my friend has forsaken it."

They always addressed one another as "Mr. Evelyn" and "Mr. Pepys," never "John" and "Samuel." Indeed Evelyn regarded such familiar mode of address as vulgar. No one, except perhaps his brothers and probably not even his wife, addressed him as "John."

On Saturdays Pepys had been in the habit of collecting together *literati* in his rooms. Evelyn thought these meetings "most advantageous and gainful," but since Pepys had retired he said the day had become "wholly saturnine, lugubrious and solitary."

Of Pepys's letters to Evelyn fewer have been preserved, and they are not so warm, but one can see how much he appreciated the constant attention of his faithful friend. His own health was failing, and he urged Evelyn to remember "what o'clock it is with you and me," and wishes for the lengthening of "that precious rest of life which God has thus long blessed you (and in you mankind) with." In answer to a letter from Evelyn he writes: "Dearest Sir" (as he now always begins), "*Dover Street* at the top and *J. Evelyn* at the bottom had alone been a sight equal in the pleasure of it to all I have had before me in my two or three months." Evelyn becomes rather sadly philosophical: "Time flies apace, my friend. 'Tis evening with us," and in an impressive passage he quotes Epictetus likening death to a call from the Master of the ship for the passengers to return on

board from their wandering:

“if thou be a man of years stray not too far, lest thou be left behind and lost thy passage. This alarm, friend, is frequently in my thoughts, intent upon finishing a thousand impertinencies which I fancy would render my habitation, my library, garden, collections and the work I am about, complete and easy. *At si gubernator vocavit ad navem* we must leave them all. . . . Let us both be ready to leave them when the master calls.”

In one of his letters, Pepys shows how he is determined not to be downcast: “Yet I thank God too, I have not with me one of those melancholy misgivings that you seem haunted with. The worse the World uses me the better I think I am bound to use myself.” Evelyn no doubt delighted in this worldly wisdom.

Visits went on as well as letters. In September, 1700, Pepys tells his nephew Jackson: “Mr. Evelyn and his Lady did me within these ten days the honour of coming over to me hither from Wotton with their whole family of children, children in law and grandchildren.” (This sounds a large company, but there was only one child alive—Susanna Draper. She, her husband and children, and grandson John and his sister must have formed the company.) Then there was the last visit of inquiry shortly before Pepys died.

Had his health allowed him he would certainly have attended the funeral.

If a seemingly disproportionate amount of space is

given to Evelyn's friendship with Pepys, it is not because Pepys can be ranked above Jeremy Taylor or Robert Boyle or Lord Cornbury or Lady Sunderland as a notable figure of the day, nor is it because Evelyn ranked him above these in his intimacy with him as a friend. It is because, through Pepys's eyes and faithful pen, we get a better sight of Evelyn than from anyone else. While Evelyn, as a man and as a notable figure in his time, stands far above the secretary of the Admiralty (indeed, no comparison whatever can be made between the two men), while Evelyn's memory for years after his death was venerated and his books referred to, whereas Pepys in the eighteenth century passed completely into oblivion, the publication of their records in the early nineteenth century has completely reversed the popularity of the two. There is now a Pepys Society, an annual dinner at Magdalen College, an annual service at St. Olave's, Crutched Friars; almost every line he wrote officially or privately has been printed, and research has been extended into the most obscure recesses of his public and domestic activities. There is no Evelyn Society, Balliol College has not even a portrait of him, only very few of his works have been republished, some only in small editions, and for one person who has read his diary there are hundreds who have read Pepys's. The reason of all this simply is that the diary of the one affords very special and, indeed, unique entertainment, while that of the other must appeal to a restricted audience as little more than a footnote to history. But as the life of the one was incomparably

more interesting than the life of the other, and his character and position very much higher, some attempt to readjust the balance would seem to be needed.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DIARY

ALTHOUGH the word "Diary" has been used for all the editions of Evelyn's record, and is for convenience and simplicity's sake used in these pages, it is not, strictly speaking, accurate. In an entry in 1673 he himself refers to it as "Memoirs," but in a list he made of "Things I would write out fair and reform if I had leisure" he calls it "My own Ephemeris or Diary." "Memoirs" is more correct than "Diary," because as will be seen it consists perhaps more of what was written in after years than of what was written on the day.

There are diaries written daily with such care and punctuality that if a day is missed a blank is left. There are diaries (the most common) generally written on the day with summaries of days, weeks or months made when for some reason or other daily writing has not been possible. But, in this case the diarist never tampers with the daily entries. There are memoirs which make no attempt at daily dated entries, although notes written at the time may be used and even quoted.

Evelyn's record, which covers practically the whole of his life, does not fit into any of these three categories. As a diary it lacks some essential and

valuable characteristics. As memoirs it is confusing because it is often impossible to say what the younger man wrote on the day, and whether the older man altered it, added to it, or left it just as it was written. This does not of course apply to the very early years, a summary of which is given as a preface to many diaries. There is a slight indication of when the earliest passages were written. He mentions his brother George's second wife in his opening summary. As George's first wife died in 1644, the work of writing up his memoirs must have been begun by Evelyn at a subsequent date, and he worked at it periodically.

But a word more must be said about the various methods of diary-writing in order to explain precisely the disadvantages of the method adopted by Evelyn. Daily writing, even in the case of an objective diary, always reflects to some degree a passing mood. Impressions and opinions, as much of public events as of domestic happenings, are by this means presented fresh with the vivid observation of the man who heard of them or witnessed them at the moment. When a man writes down in after years how a sequence of events struck him, he writes with a knowledge of the issue, which in most cases transforms or, at any rate, alters his view. There may be of course considerable interest in these autobiographical recollections, but they are not the same thing as the daily registering with surprise, with alarm, with hope, with despair or with joy, of incidents the sequel of which is hidden from the writer's sight. When, as in

Evelyn's case, there is a mixture of the two which cannot be disentangled, both methods seem to be spoilt. When the younger man proclaims at some event his pleasure or sorrow, and the older man adds to that entry the sequel with another expression of opinion, it is not always easy to know where one begins and the other ends. From the point of view of history a more complete record may thus be given, but from the point of view of human and personal interest a great deal is lost.

Moreover, in some editions of the Diary this has led commentators to suppose opinions written in the first thirty years of the record to be the spontaneous reflections of young Evelyn, whereas they may well be, and probably often are, the considered opinion of the older Evelyn. Indeed, in some ways a document frankly written as memoirs with an occasional clearly marked quotation from original notes would be preferable.

All this makes any comparison of Evelyn's Diary with any other diary unnecessary. Its merits—and, of course, it has very considerable merits—depend on considerations quite other than those connected with diary-writing. It is no good saying that Pepys wrote a better diary in nine years than Evelyn did in a lifetime. Pepys's record is the most absolute and complete diary imaginable. Evelyn's can scarcely be judged as a diary at all.

Among other diarists, using the term as broadly as possible, there are two who resemble Evelyn in their method. Sir Simonds D'Ewes was a member of

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Parliament and an Antiquary who kept a diary from 1619 to 1636, and wrote it up sometimes, retaining dated entries, but intending to present to his successors a more readable and consecutive narrative than a diary with its inevitable repetitions, want of perspective and casual irrelevancies could give. While D'Ewes's historical narrative, although it has lively passages, is not as interesting or effective as Evelyn's, he is addicted in some degree to introspection and occupies many entries with a recital of domestic occurrences.

The second is Sir John Reresby, M.P. for Aldborough. He was a royalist, and contemporary of Evelyn's, although they never met. Reresby was a man of no particular account, but from diary notes he deliberately wrote himself up for posterity in his *memoirs*. "He writes well and the germ of truth which a dated entry written at the time naturally suggests makes the reader inclined to accept it all, and as he reads to wonder why the name of this confidant of kings and queens, this courageous and sagacious statesman is not written larger in the pages of history."\*

His *memoirs*, in fact, show the danger of the writing up method. Evelyn may have written up but there is no suggestion whatever that he wrote *himself* up. One or two of Reresby's records of his conversations with Charles II are more graphic and entertaining than Evelyn's. As to whether they are trustworthy is another matter. His notes on public events are good,

\*See *More English Diaries*. A. Ponsonby, pp. 64-67.

and when he philosophises about life in general he does it well. Egmont in the eighteenth century, and Greville in the nineteenth century, to instance two other historical diarists, as we may term them, both adopted the almost daily method of entry, even at the risk of exposing themselves to the charge of change of opinion and contradiction in their views.

The older Evelyn, writing sometimes no doubt long after the event, makes mistakes in dates, and often adds information which could not have been known to the younger Evelyn on the day in question. Sometimes tell-tale words such as "since," "afterwards," "three days later," "about this time," etc., show the hand of the memoir-writer. But one would hardly expect him in his revision to get dates so wrong as to write that the Duke of Richmond's funeral took place in 1641, whereas he was buried in Westminster Abbey in 1655; that he witnessed Cromwell's funeral on October 22nd when it took place on November 23rd, or to mention the Treaty of Breda concluded in 1667 as the reason for the sudden stopping of his book on the Dutch War in 1674. Again in grouping a series of events he dates the battle of Edgehill October 3rd, when it was fought on October 23rd. In fact his dates are quite unreliable, although allowance must be made also for the original transcribers of the Diary, who may have fitted a marginal date into a wrong line of the text.

The earlier entries were mostly written up from very meagre notes. The travel entries are amplified and written up from full notes. The main part of the

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record consists largely of genuine diary entries, sometimes with quite easily recognised additions, as, for instance, the entry of January 17th, 1653, which begins, "I began to set out the oval garden at Sayes Court," etc., written by the Evelyn of thirty-three; and ends, "This was the beginning of all the succeeding gardens, walks, groves, enclosures and plantations there," written by a much older Evelyn when all this work had been completed.

On the entry of September 19th, 1655, which tells of visitors at Sayes Court, and ends with a paragraph describing his practice on Sunday afternoons, when "I frequently stayed at home," etc.

Again, in the following year, on March 13th, "This afternoon Prince Rupert showed me with his own hands the new way of graving, etc." (obviously written on the day) "which afterwards by his permission I published in my *History of Chalcography*;\* this set so many artists on work," etc. (as obviously added much later). To give one more instance, on August 3rd, 1667, Abraham Cowley's funeral is described. At the end is written, "A goodly monument is since erected to his memory."

In the entry dated July 26th, 1680, a good instance may be found of a diary entry. It begins: "This morning" (a conversation with Lord Ossory), followed by accounts of subsequent days also from diary entries recording Lord Ossory's death, and ending by a eulogy and character sketch added by the revising Evelyn much later.

\**Sculptura*, p. 232.

In addition to these undoubted additions the original text was altered and amplified in some of the longer entries.

But as already said one of the most attractive features of a real diary is the writer's ignorance of the morrow. Curiously enough we get this in a series of entries which the older Evelyn left untouched in which are described the sequence of events describing the flight of James II and the arrival of William III. Here it may be noticed that Evelyn uses the present tense and only the events of the day are recorded, showing the ignorance of the writer as to what will happen. The entry of December 2nd, 1688, actually ends, "It looks like a revolution," and on December 13th he writes: "The King flies to sea, puts in at Faversham for ballast; is rudely treated by the people; comes back to Whitehall." This method is continued in the longer entries when such expressions as "it is thought that," "it is likely that" refer to an as yet unknown future. Subsequently, in particular sentences and generalisations the hand of the reviser can again be traced. During the last years at Wotton the entries, one would have thought, would be untouched. Yet there are traces of revision even here. On his eighty-second birthday he reads over "all that passed since this day twelve months in these notes" and as will be shown revision was still going on.

But the difficulties connected with the text of Evelyn's memoirs are by no means disposed of by these observations on his method. Discrepancies, different readings and omitted passages abound in all

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the hitherto published texts. The full explanation of this shows such a confusion and complication that some attempt must be made to recite the story of how the manuscripts were handled as far as it is known.

Up to the year 1814, that is to say a hundred and eight years after the death of John Evelyn, his manuscripts were stowed away at Wotton. Except for Sir John Evelyn, the second Baronet, the celebrated Evelyn's great-grandson, no member of the family had considered them of any particular interest or importance, and in all probability the Diary had not often been read. Lady Evelyn, widow of Sir Frederick Evelyn, was living at Wotton in 1814. She knew about the Diary, but did not realise its value. Its existence became known to people outside the family, of whom William Upcott, Assistant Librarian of the London Institution, seems to have been the first.

As to the truth of the following anecdote\* no one can vouch.

In 1814, Mr. W. Upcott, being on a visit at Wotton in Surrey, and sitting after dinner with Lady Evelyn and her friend, Mrs. Molineux, happened to notice a tippet of feathers on which Lady Evelyn was employed.

"We have all of us our hobbies, I perceive, My lady," said Mr. Upcott.

"Very true," returned her ladyship, "and pray what may yours be?"

"Mine, Madam, from a very early age, began by

\*Preface to *Frederick Strong's Catalogue*, quoted in *Dews' Deptford* and also in *Home Life of English Ladies in the Seventeenth Century*, 1860.

collecting provincial copper tokens; and, latterly, the handwriting of men who have distinguished themselves in every walk of life."

"Handwritings," exclaimed Lady Evelyn with surprise. "What do you mean by handwritings? Surely, you don't mean old letters?"—at the same time opening the drawer of her work-table and taking out a small parcel of papers, some of which had just been used by Mrs. Molineux as patterns for articles of dress. The sight of this packet, though of no literary importance, yet containing letters written by eminent characters (more particularly one from the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough), afforded the greatest pleasure to Mr. Upcott, who expressed delight in looking them over.

"Oh!" exclaimed Lady Evelyn. "If you care for papers like these, you shall have plenty; for Sylva Evelyn" (the familiar appellation applied to John Evelyn by his descendants) "and those who succeeded him, preserved all their letters."

"Then"—ringing for her confidential attendant—"Here," said her ladyship, "Mr. Upcott tells me he is fond of collecting old letters; take the key of the ebony cabinet in the billiard-room, procure a basket, and bring down some of the bundles."

Mr. Upcott accompanied the attendant, and having brought a quantity of these letters into the dining-room, passed an agreeable evening in examining the contents of each packet, with the assurance from Lady Evelyn that he was welcome to lay aside any that he might desire for his own collection. On

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the following evening the ebony cabinet was visited a second time; when Evelyn's *Kalendarium*, as he had entitled it, or "Diary," in a small quarto volume, very closely written with his own hand, presented itself. This interesting family document had been lent by Lady Evelyn from time to time to her particular friends, yet she did not consider its contents of sufficient importance for publication, and, except for accident, it might have been cut up for dress-patterns, or lighting fires.

There is nothing inherently improbable in this story, considering that even to-day little care or attention is given to collections of manuscripts in some country houses.

At any rate Lady Evelyn gave her consent to the Diary being printed, and entrusted the work to William Bray (co-author with Owen Manning of *The History of Surrey*). Bray received "great and material assistance" from Upcott, and the first edition in two quarto volumes appeared in 1818, printed by Colburn.

Lady Evelyn died in 1817, and the original dedication intended for her was transferred to John Evelyn, her husband's cousin who succeeded at Wotton. The book was published by Colburn with notes by Bray and James Bindley.

In 1819 a second edition was issued, and in 1827 a five-volume octavo edition, which was reprinted with an introduction by Henry B. Wheatley in 1879. In the Preface it is stated that, after several applications to the owner of the MS., Mr. W. J.

Evelyn of Wotton, for permission to consult it, that gentleman eventually replied that "Colburn's third edition of the Diary was very correctly printed from the MS.," and "might be relied on as giving an accurate text."

Upcott continued to be interested and had access to other papers at Wotton. In 1825 he published Evelyn's Miscellaneous Writings in a quarto volume. On his death in 1845, his effects were sold, and many papers from Wotton, which Lady Evelyn lent him or gave him, have since found their way to the British Museum.

The mystery began between 1850-52, when John Forster, the biographer of Goldsmith, published a fresh issue of Bray. He explained that Upcott had, up to his death, been at work on the revision and preparation of the version which Forster edited. Upcott had compared the text with the original manuscript, "by which many material omissions in the earlier quartos were supplied, and other not unimportant corrections made." There was a re-issue of Forster's edition in 1857 in Bohn's Illustrated Library, and this text was used by Austin Dobson in his three-volume edition of 1906.

It became clear that the manuscript used by Bray, and that used by Forster, were not the same.\* In Vol. XI of the *Antiquary* J. J. Foster gives an explanation with regard to the various manuscripts:

\**The Antiquary*, Vol. XI. The prefaces to Wheatley's edition and Austin Dobson's edition of the Diary may be consulted for some of the above related facts; also H. Maynard Smith's preface to *The Early Life and Education of John Evelyn*.

There are preserved at Wotton three MS. copies of the Memoirs. A: a quarto book (in a small and exquisitely neat handwriting) from the beginning of the Diary till February 3rd, 1706, all of it written by John Evelyn himself (except from August to September, 1697, which seems to have been copied in a modern hand). B: from the beginning till October, 1644. This is in Mr. Evelyn's handwriting except the last few lines, which were by the pen of his grandson, afterwards Sir John Evelyn, Bart. This is an unfinished amplified version of A. It is handsomely whole-bound with the crest of Mrs. Evelyn over John Evelyn's own crest and has a monogram on the covers. C is a copy from B in a youthful handwriting, and was made apparently in 1737 by the author's great-grandson, Sir John Evelyn, second baronet.

In view of some other statements, J. J. Foster's account is probably only approximately correct. At any rate it shows how some of the confusion arose, and confirms the fact that Evelyn revised and revised again his diary. But there are still the original notes to be accounted for. In 1631 there is only one entry; in it he writes, "I began to observe matters more punctually which I did use to set down in a blank almanack." In spite of this there are only single entries for each year up to 1636.

In the library of Balliol College, Oxford, there are preserved a set of little almanacks of the early seventeenth century. Two of these belonged to Evelyn and give an indication, although a very meagre one, of his method and his original notes.

Scribbled on the title-page of the Dove Almanack of 1636 are the following two sentences:

“This year the pestilence was at London and at many other places more. This was a very dry year.”

In the Memoirs this is transcribed:

“This year being extremely dry the pestilence much increased in London and divers parts of England.”

In a Langley Almanack of 1637 there are notes made in seven out of the twelve months. A large part of them is so heavily scored out as to be illegible, though occasional lines are left or re-written. Comparing these brief notes, which concern his leaving the Free School at Lewes, his matriculation, his being entered with his brother George at the Middle Temple, his receiving the Holy Communion, etc., with the entries in the Memoirs, it can be seen that the reviser was responsible for a great deal more of what is printed in the Memoirs than the original diarist.

The fullest possible edition is now in course of careful preparation.\* But some idea of it can be gathered from the full text given in the *Abinger Monthly Record* in July, 1889, and the following months, which was “Corrected by kind permission of Mr. Evelyn from the original Manuscript at Wotton.”

It comprises the last few years of his Diary from October 4th, 1699.

\*See the *Oxford Companion to English Literature*.

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The first impression in examining the full version of these years is surprise at the enormous difference in length between it and the Forster's text used by Austin Dobson. Take the full year 1700. Austin Dobson gives twenty-seven entries. In the *Abinger Monthly Record* there are seventy-seven! But dismay at the mutilation of the Diary by this drastic editing is allayed when the actual entries are examined. In August and September, for instance, the Austin Dobson text gives two entries, the full version, 11. But in what do the omitted entries consist? Except for a reference to health and the weather and a visit to his daughter and son-in-law Draper, they are all accounts of sermons, some of immense length. To mention other passages omitted from the published version, there is a note that Mrs. Evelyn, "Still affected with a cough," had gone "for the benefit of the air on the beach" at Greenwich; a note on her recovery and the birth of a grandchild; his own suffering from stone; his being "overcome with drowsiness" during one of the long sermons, and the statement that when he cannot hear sermons in church he reads them at home. There are instances which show the old man was still revising up to 1702.

Against the entry of June 28th, 1702, "I went to visit Mr. Pepys at Clapham," there is a marginal note, "Here is a mistake of the days for I dined at Lambeth the 15th and at Mr. Pepys the 18th."

On May 14th, 1703, he visits the Archbishop at Lambeth, and, "I called in also at Clapham to visit

Mr. Pepys now languishing with smallpox which much affected me." This was twelve days before Pepys died, and this visit is news to all who have not examined the obscure and not easily procured Parish Magazine known as the *Abinger Monthly Record*.

Perhaps the passages throughout the Diary which have been abbreviated in or omitted from the published version may not amount to anything of first importance. But who could judge? Certainly not Upcott. With very few exceptions, editors of diaries have the most mistaken notion of their business. They cut entries they consider too long, they omit incident which they consider trivial, they cling to bald recitals of public events which can be found in any contemporary news-sheet, and, in fact, they seem to be utterly ignorant of what elements make a diary human and vital.

Pepys's Diary, which was unearthed because of the reference to him in the first published edition of Evelyn's diary, suffered in the same way. In reviewing the first edition of Pepys's Diary in the *Quarterly*, Sir Walter Scott saw at once that the two volumes were a drastic abbreviation of the whole. He deplored the use "of the pruning knife," and said: "The editor will generally speaking best attain his purpose by giving a liberal transcript of the papers in his hands; whatever falls short of this diminishes to a certain degree our confidence in the genuine character of his materials." It was sixty-eight years before a full transcript of Pepys's Diary was published, and even those eight volumes are to be superseded by

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a still more complete edition. It will be close on a hundred and twenty years before we get the whole of Evelyn's.

This ridiculous method of a short version first appearing, and then, after appeals and persuasions, gradually longer texts being given, till at last, after many years the whole document is presented, is a direct inversion of what should be done. The whole manuscript should be entrusted in the first instance to a competent transcriber, and then subsequently abbreviated versions published to suit public taste. In this case Lady Evelyn (in 1814) is not to be blamed, but Bray and Upcott are the culprits. Since that time the inaccessibility of the manuscripts at Wotton until to-day has thwarted the efforts of those who desired to complete the work.

Evelyn's memoirs, however, in the form in which we have them, have justly been given a high, if not a unique place among first-hand historical records. In spite of all the drawbacks above recorded, a close view of Evelyn the man is given and a number of valuable footnotes to history appear in his pages. The memoirs may, in many respects for the reasons given, lack the special diary quality, but this does not alter the fact that Evelyn was a diarist. That is to say he was a constant recorder of the events of his life, partly perhaps because he was brought into the company of so many of the great people of the day that he thought his intercourse with them and his doings would be of interest to his successors, partly because, he foresaw, after Charles I's execution, a

possibility of continued national troubles, the sequence of which would deserve registering, and partly no doubt because it was yet another systematic and constant occupation which could be continued in season and out of season during his lifetime.

Although the domestic side of the Diary is subordinated to the public side, and although by his disposition he was not given to many general reflections nor any attempts at self-analysis, he treats of a great variety of subjects and includes the trivial with the more important. Evelyn's method is strictly objective. Houses, gardens, inventions, curiosities and sometimes public events and ceremonials inspire him to write at length. If only he could have devoted the space he gives to the description of country houses and official receptions to one of his many conversations with Charles II, how grateful we should be! If only he could have described half as much about his living wife as he did about his two dead children, we should gain a clearer view of that remarkable woman.

Fortunately, the Diary can be supplemented by his letters and writings, and from all this material a good portrait emerges of a man who kept his head in turbulent times, who steered a straight course in a licentious epoch, and who never relaxed from his work of preserving and encouraging beauty, culture and knowledge.

On gardens, architecture, painting and decoration he writes with authority, his personal sketches are rare, he has very little narration, but his powers of

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description of striking scenes are often excellent. A few instances may be given here in addition to those quoted in other chapters.

In his travel notes there are some fine descriptive passages. One of the best is his account of an expedition made in November, 1644, riding from Siena to Aquapendente.

"Next morning, we rode by Monte Piento, or, as vulgarly called, Monte Mantumiato, which is of an excessive height, ever and anon peeping above any clouds with its snowy head, till we had climbed to the inn at Radicofani, built by Ferdinand, the great Duke, for the necessary refreshment of travellers in so inhospitable a place. As we ascended, we entered a very thick, solid, and dark body of clouds, looking like rocks at a little distance, which lasted near a mile in going up; they were dry misty vapours, hanging undissolved for a vast thickness, and obscuring both the sun and earth, so that we seemed to be in the sea rather than in the clouds, till, having pierced through it, we came into a most serene heaven, as if we had been above all human conversation, the mountain appearing more like a great island than joined to any other hills; for we could perceive nothing but a sea of thick clouds rolling under our feet like huge waves, every now and then suffering the top of some other mountain to peep through, which we could discover many miles off: and between some breaches of the clouds we could see landscapes and villages of the subjacent country. This was one of the most pleasant, new, and altogether surprising objects that I had ever beheld."

Evelyn gives a good description of the fire of

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London, although it is not quite so dramatic as Pepys's. He makes a slight error of a day with regard to the actual outbreak. He enumerates the streets which he saw being consumed, and he sees the fire "taking hold of St. Paul's Church to which the scaffolds contributed exceedingly." He then goes on:

"The conflagration was so universal and the people so astonished, that, from the beginning, I know not by what despondency, or fate, they hardly stirred to quench it: so that there was nothing heard, or seen, but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save even their goods; such a strange consternation there was upon them, so as it burned both in breadth and length, the churches, public halls, Exchange, hospitals, monuments, and ornaments; leaping after a prodigious manner, from house to house, and street to street, at great distances one from the other. For the heat, with a long set of fair and warm weather, had even ignited the air, and prepared the materials to conceive the fire, which devoured, after an incredible manner, houses, furniture and everything. Here, we saw the Thames covered with goods floating, all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save, as, on the other side, the carts, etc., carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewed with movables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh, the miserable and calamitous spectacle! such as haply the world had not seen since the foundation of it, nor be outdone till the universal conflagration thereof. All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above forty miles round-

about for many nights. God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw above 10,000 houses all in one flame! The noise and cracking and thunder of the impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses and churches was like a hideous storm; and the air all about so hot and inflamed, that at the last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still, and let the flames burn on, which they did, for near two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds also of smoke were dismal, and reached, upon computation, near fifty miles in length. Thus I left it this afternoon burning a resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. It forcibly called to my mind that passage—*non enim hic habemus stabilem civitatem*: the ruins resembling the picture of Troy. London was, but is no more! Thus, I returned.”

One or two examples may be given of his description of the ceremonies in which he took a special interest.

In 1669 he went to the Encænïa at Oxford on the occasion of the opening of the New Theatre, which had been presented by Dr. Gilbert Sheldon, and designed by Sir Christopher Wren. The ceremony drew “a world of strangers and other company to the University from all parts of the Nation.”

“The Vice-Chancellor, Heads of Houses, and Doctors, being seated in magisterial seats, the Vice-Chancellor’s chair and desk, Proctors’, etc., covered with brocatelle [a kind of brocade] and cloth of gold; the University Registrar read the founder’s

grant and gift of it to the University for their scholastic exercises upon these solemn occasions. Then followed Dr. South, the University's orator, in an eloquent speech, which was very long, and not without some malicious and indecent reflections on the Royal Society, as underminers of the University; which was very foolish and untrue, as well as unseasonable. But, to let that pass from an ill-natured man, the rest was in praise of the Archbishop and the ingenious architect. This ended, after loud music from the corridor above, where an organ was placed, there followed divers panegyric speeches, both in prose and verse, interchangeably pronounced by the young students placed in the rostrums, in Pindarics, Eclogues, Heroics, etc., mingled with excellent music, vocal and instrumental, to entertain the ladies and the rest of the company. A speech was then made in praise of academical learning. This lasted from eleven in the morning till seven at night, which was concluded with ringing of bells, and universal joy and feasting.

The next day began the more solemn lectures in all the faculties, which were performed in the several schools, where all the inceptor-doctors did their exercises, the professors having first ended their reading. The assembly now returned to the theatre, where the *Terræ filius* (the *University Buffoon*) entertained the auditory with a tedious, abusive, sarcastical rhapsody, most unbecoming the gravity of the University, and that so grossly, that unless it be suppressed, it will be of ill consequence, as I afterwards plainly expressed my sense of it both to the Vice-Chancellor and several Heads of Houses, who were perfectly ashamed of it, and resolved to take care of it in future. The old facetious way of rallying upon the questions was left off, falling

wholly upon persons, so that it was rather licentious lying and railing than genuine and noble wit. In my life, I was never witness of so shameful entertainment. After this ribaldry, the proctors made their speeches. Then began the music act, vocal and instrumental, above in the balustrade corridor opposite to the vice-chancellor's seat."

The audience of the Ambassador from Morocco encouraged him to write at some length, but in his elaborate and amusing account of the East India Ambassadors in 1682 he goes into as much detail as in any entry in his record.

"*19th June.* The Bantam, or East India ambassadors being invited to dine at Lord George Berkeley's (now Earl), I went to the entertainment to contemplate the exotic guests. They were both very hard-favoured, and much resembling in countenance some sort of monkeys. We eat at two tables, the ambassadors and interpreter by themselves. Their garments were rich Indian silks, flowered with gold, viz. a close waistcoat to their knees, drawers, naked legs, and on their heads caps made like fruit-baskets. They wore poisoned daggers at their bosoms, the hilts carved with some ugly serpents' or devils' heads, exceeding keen, and of Damascus metal. They wore no sword. The second ambassador (sent, it seems, to succeed in case the first should die by the way in so tedious a journey), having been at Mecca, wore a Turkish or Arab sash, a little part of the linen hanging down behind his neck, with some other difference of habit, and was half a negro, bare-legged and naked feet, and deemed a very holy man. They sate crossed-legged like Turks,

and sometimes in the posture of apes and monkeys; their nails and teeth as black as jet, and shining, which being the effect, as to their teeth, of perpetually chewing betel to preserve them from the toothache, much raging in their country, is esteemed beautiful.

The first ambassador was of an olive hue, a flat face, narrow eyes, squat nose and Moorish lips, no hair appeared; they wore several rings of silver, gold, and copper on their fingers, which was a token of knighthood, or nobility. They were of Java Major, whose princes have been turned Mahomedans not above fifty years since; the inhabitants are still pagans and idolaters. They seemed of a dull and heavy constitution, not wondering at anything they saw; but exceedingly astonished how our law gave us propriety in our estates, and so thinking we were all kings, for they could not be made to comprehend how subjects could possess anything but at the pleasure of their prince, they being all slaves; they were pleased with the notion, and admired our happiness. They were very sober, and I believe subtle in their way. Their meat was cooked, carried up, and they attended by several fat slaves, who had no covering save drawers, which appeared very uncouth and loathsome. They eat their pilau, and other spoon-meat without spoons, taking up their pottage in the hollow of their fingers, and very dexterously flung it into their mouths without spilling a drop."

Of all the public incidents related in the Diary, the trial of Viscount Stafford, in 1680, takes up almost the most space. Evelyn was present, and evidently wrote down full notes on nearly consecutive days, November

30th, December 3rd, 4th, 5th and 7th. Westminster Hall was transformed, as it had been for the trial of the Earl of Strafford, with stages and raised seats, a box for the King, a gallery for ambassadors and accommodation for members of both Houses of Parliament. He enumerates the managers, the lawyers and the witnesses, including the notorious Titus Oates. "He being so slight a person, so passionate, ill-bred and of such impudent behaviour; nor is it likely that such piercing politicians as the Jesuits should trust him with so high and so dangerous secrets." He gives a minute account of the concluding scene and how exactly the final verdict was given by a vote of the Peers: fifty-one guilty, thirty-three not guilty. He shows himself to be on Stafford's side from the outset, and says he "behaved himself modestly and as became him." Another diarist present, Sir John Reresby, confirms this, declaring Stafford "defended himself with great resolution, and received his sentence with no less courage." Evelyn, however, admits he "was not a man beloved, especially of his own family." "The whole trial," he declares, "was carried on with exceeding gravity: so stately and august an appearance I had never seen before." He has no retrospective reflexions when the execution comes. He merely records it in a single sentence.

Except for definite changes of residence, it is not always clear from the entries where he is at the time of writing. But this is a common omission with most diarists. There are probably more weather notes in

the full version; as a gardener he would be likely specially to notice it. The great frosts, the storms and the dry or wet periods are always recorded.

Like a number of other diarists Evelyn makes some reflections on the anniversary of his birthday. These are pious thanksgivings which show his deeply religious nature. In 1680, on his sixtieth birthday, he writes:

*"30th October.* I went to London to be private, my birthday being the next day, and I now arrived at my sixtieth year; on which I began a more solemn survey of my whole life, in order to the making and confirming my peace with God, by an accurate scrutiny of all my actions past, as far as I was able to call them to mind. How difficult and uncertain, yet how necessary a work! The Lord be merciful to me, and accept me! Who can tell how oft he offendeth? Teach me, therefore, so to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom, and make my calling and election sure. Amen, Lord Jesus!"

On his eightieth birthday:

*"31st October.* My birthday, now completed the eightieth year of my age. I with my soul render thanks to God, who, of His infinite mercy, not only brought me out of many troubles, but this year restored me to health, after an ague and other infirmities of so great an age, my sight, hearing, and other senses and faculties tolerable, which I implore Him to continue, with the pardon of my sins past, and grace to acknowledge by my improvement of His goodness the ensuing year, if it be His

pleasure to protract my life, that I may be the better prepared for my last day, through the infinite merits of my blessed Saviour, the Lord Jesus, Amen."

His last entry is on February 3rd, 1705-6, and consists of notes of sermons preached on that day. He died on the 27th of the month. Like the vast majority of diarists he left no instructions as to what he wished done with his record.

Evelyn gained a high reputation while he lived, and after he died the author of *Sylva* continued long to be remembered. But, undoubtedly, the publication of his Memoirs threw so much more light on the man, his activities and his influence, and gave so many additional facts and comments on the later Stuart period, that they have been instrumental in establishing the observant recorder as a notable figure in English history.

## CHAPTER VIII

### EVELYN'S WORKS

EVELYN'S erudition and his diligent and studious character would make one expect that, in his long life, he would have been responsible for a fine array of volumes on some of the many subjects about which he had special knowledge. Far from this being the case, there are only one or two works of his which, in length, can be classified as books at all. Indeed, except for his *Sylva* and his *History of Religion*,\* his writings are for the most part discourses, tracts, occasional papers, more or less controversial essays and translations. Laziness was certainly not the cause of this. If anything he was over-active in too many directions and was distracted by his multifarious pursuits. Modesty may have prevented him from issuing in printed form volumes compiled from his stacks of notes. He knew enough to realise the incompleteness of his knowledge.

More probably it was actual lack of time which prevented him from accomplishing such projects as writing "A General History of all Trades," which he had in mind, or completing his treatises on painting in oil and in miniature, annealing in glass, enamelling, and making marble paper. The inclination of his

\*See page 108.

genius did not lead him in the direction of fiction or fancy, although "A tragy-comedie," called *Thyrsander*, was left in manuscript among his papers. He avoided the more controversial side of politics, and in the sphere of philosophy, science and art he appears to have been modestly conscious of his limitations. There is, moreover, in what remains of his original published works a certain clumsiness of construction. Partly he seems overburdened by his knowledge, and he shows himself generally lacking in any capacity for decision as to a beginning, a middle and an end in any argument or discourse.

His *History of the Dutch War*, had it been finished, might have been a lengthy work of some importance. It is true he did not undertake the task entirely on his own initiative, since he was commissioned to write it. It is also true that his failure to finish it was not his fault, as will be seen when the facts are related.

In his Journal, Evelyn tells us that it was in February, 1669, that Lord Arlington, the Secretary of State, "began to tempt me about writing 'the Dutch War.'" Evelyn, however, was responsible for putting the idea into Arlington's head. He had come across two books, one written in French the other in Latin, licensed by the Dutch Government, giving an account of the war of such a monstrously biased character as "to render His Majesty and people cheap and vile, the subjects of derision and contempt." So he wrote to Clifford\* in February, 1668-9, at

\*Sir Thomas Clifford, Lord Treasurer of England.

length and with great heat begging him to consider "what effects such malevolent suggestions do produce, and with what a black and deep malice contrived." He urges that Arlington may be moved to have a full defence written by "some sober and instructed person," who shall be appointed Royal Historiographer. He rather lamely disclaims any desire to do it himself, "who have neither the requisite talents nor the least presumption for it."

This inevitably led in the following June to a definite command.

"After dinner, my Lord communicated to me his Majesty's desire that I would engage to write his History of our late war with the Hollanders which I had hitherto declined; this I found was ill taken and that I should disoblige His Majesty who had made choice of me to do him this service, and if I would undertake it, I should have all the assistance the secretary's office and others could give me, with other encouragements which I could not decently refuse."

So he sets to work. But he soon finds it is a bigger job than he bargained for, if he is to do it thoroughly—and Evelyn was incapable of superficial work. He tells Clifford,\* therefore, that he hopes the King "will neither believe the time long nor me altogether indiligent if he do not receive this history so soon as otherwise he might have expected." He assures Clifford he is prepared to tackle the mounds of

\*Letter to Sir Thomas Clifford, January 20th, 1670.

material, and, indeed, begs him to have more sent to him.

In August, 1670, when at Windsor, he has a long conference with Arlington in his bedchamber, and "I showed him something I had drawn up to his great satisfaction." Later in the year Clifford, the Lord Treasurer, gives him "secret pieces and transactions," and "ten paper books of despatches and treaties," which were to be returned to Mr. Joseph Williamson, Master of the Paper Office.

Two letters to Williamson\* in 1671 show how seriously he was working at the book. Joseph Williamson was secretary to Arlington. He was also clerk of the council, and subsequently himself became Secretary of State. Evelyn does not often give critical judgments of individuals, but he makes some comment about Sir Joseph Williamson, who was something of an adventurer:

"Williamson is transferred to him (Arlington) who loving his ease more than business (though sufficiently able had he applied himself to it) remitted all to his man Williamson; and, in a short time, let him into the secret of affairs, that (as his Lordship himself told me) there was a kind of necessity to advance him; and so, by his subtlety, dexterity, and insinuation, he got now to be principal secretary; absolutely Lord Arlington's creature, and ungrateful enough. It has been the fate of this obliging favourite to advance those who soon forgot their original. Sir Joseph was a musician, could play at *Jeu de Gobelets*, exceeding formal, a severe master to

\**Calendar of State Papers*. Domestic, 1671.

his servants, but so inward with my Lord O'Brien, that after a few months of that gentleman's death, he married his widow, who being sister and heir of the Duke of Richmond, brought him a noble fortune. It was thought they lived not so kindly after marriage as they did before. She was much censured for marrying so meanly, being herself allied to the Royal family."

Pepys thought Williamson "a pretty knowing man, and a scholar, but it may be he thinks himself to be too much so."

Evelyn's letter to Williamson is written in January. He says he has already made good progress, he transmits his synopsis, in which there are blanks to be filled in. He wants more papers. He has diligently perused "the last monstrous volume" on the war by Aitzema,\* a Dutchman. He is amazed at the man's industry; the book contains "many rare pieces and much trash." He asks Williamson to "consult seriously and at good leisure with my Lord Arlington and Mr. Treasurer when I shall take scope, touch gently or make it smart." "It is labour for a strong beast," he complains. That very week he has written twenty-four full sheets, "yet, I have my *beads* to say and a *family* to consider and a number of other impertinences of my own life."

It is a delightful letter written more naturally because Williamson at the time was not a high official. Evelyn is seeking more luggage, but for the moment he is free from the impedimenta of his

\**Saken van Staet en Oorlogh*, by Lieuwe van Aitzema, 1669-72.

erudition. He ends up with an excellent sentence - which unfortunately in this particular case did not turn out to be true. "I can," he says, "write sharply, and make the world feel the nib of my pen an hundred years to come."

The second letter is written in April. "I make, as yet, no great noise with my Dutch task, but I have near an hundred sheets of paper which I hope will not reproach my sedulity."

The correspondence with Clifford continues. He sketches more elaborately the design of his work, which certainly promised to be tremendous. "I confess it were yet capable of politure and would show much brighter in another dress among the curious to whom singly it might haply prove no unacceptable entertainment: I could also add considerably to it but some perhaps may think it already too large for a *vestibule*, though that will best appear when the superstructure is finished, which, if my calculation abuse me not will amount to at least 800 or 1,000 pages in folio, notwithstanding all the care I can apply to avoid impertinences . . ." (in a letter to Clifford, August 31st, 1671). He encloses the Introduction, which, he explains, seems "less severe than becomes the fore-lorn\* of so rude a subject which follows it." After the despatch of the Introduction he is still hard at work, and writes to Clarendon's son, Lord Cornbury, for certain papers.

In January, 1673-4, the King tells him to write something "against the Hollanders about the duty of

\*From the Dutch *verloren hoop*, i.e., skirmishing party.

the Flag and Fishery” and gives him some more papers.

A few months later Evelyn’s Introduction, with a dedication to the King, was printed and published with the following elaborate title:

*“Navigation and Commerce, their Original and Progress containing a succinct Account of Traffic in General, its Benefits and Improvements; of Discoveries, Wars and Conflicts at Sea, from the Original of Navigation to this Day; with special regard to the English Nation; their several Voyages and Expeditions, to the beginning of our late Differences with Holland; In which His Majesties Title to the Dominion of the Sea is asserted against the Novel, and later Pretenders. By J. Evelyn, Esq., S.R.S. Dedicated to the King.”*

Within three or four months, on August 12th, 1674, the following command was issued by the King:

“The King to the Master and Wardens of the Stationers Co. Having taken notice of a little book printed and published by John Evelyn *Navigation and Commerce their Original and Progress*.

Wherein he uses several expressions derogatory to the country and good understanding between us and some of our allies and wherein he also intermeddles with certain matters of state beyond what becomes him or belongs to him, for which causes we think fit that it be called in and suppressed; we hereby command you to search for and seize all the printed copies of the said book and bring them to one of the Secretaries of State and to take care

that no more of them be printed or exposed for sale but you are to seize as many as you shall meet with and bring them to one of the Secretaries of State."

Evelyn explains this in an entry in his Journal, dated August 19th, 1674.

"His Majesty told me how exceedingly the Dutch were displeased at my treatise of the *History of Commerce*; that the Holland Ambassador had complained to him of what I had touched of the Flags and Fishery, etc., and desired the book might be called in; whilst on the other side, he assured me he was exceedingly pleased with what I had done, and gave me many thanks. However it being just upon conclusion of the Treaty of Breda (indeed it was designed to have been published some months before and when we were at defiance), His Majesty told me he must recall it formally; but gave order that what copies should be publicly seized to pacify the Ambassador, should immediately be restored to the printer and that neither he nor the vendor should be molested. The truth is, that which touched the Hollander was much less than what the King himself furnished me with and obliged me to publish, having caused it to be read to him before it went to the press; but the error was, it should have been published before the peace was proclaimed. The noise of this book's suppression made it presently be bought up, and turned much to the stationer's advantage.\* It was no other than the preface prepared to be prefixed to my history of the whole War; which I now pursued no further."

\*Benjamin Tooke the bookseller did good business by selling it freely *sub rosa*.

This entry in his Diary, like many others, was made some time later, and in it Evelyn has confused the dates. There were two Dutch wars. The first broke out in 1665, and was concluded by the Treaty of Breda in 1667—a fact noted in the Journal. But it was not till two years had passed that Evelyn even thought of writing the book at all. The “conclusion of the Treaty of Breda,” therefore, had nothing whatever to do with the censoring of his book. The second Dutch war broke out in 1672, and was concluded in 1674, and it was this peace, framed on the demands of Charles and Louis of France (who was the ally of England in the second war), to which Evelyn should have referred in his explanation of the King’s action with regard to his book. There is a manuscript\* written by Evelyn entitled “A succinct, but full deduction of His Majesty’s indubitable title to the Dominion and Sovereignty of the British Seas and consequently the Fishery and Duties appendant thereunto,” on which he notes:

“I was commanded by His Majesty to draw up this Deduction, to have been published a little before the peace made between us and the Dutch, February, 1673-4; but having spoken a little warmly (I know not whether truly) concerning the Flag we durst not exasperate the French in that conjunction of affairs, and so it was stopped just as it was carrying to the press. J. E. first part.”

Here he correctly dates the peace and shows that it was the French whom the King was anxious not to

\*Pepys MSS. Historical Manuscripts Commission.

offend as well as the Dutch.

In any case the work which was absorbing his time and attention was promptly cut short and all his efforts counted for nothing.

There is an element of anticlimax in the final fate of his folios and copious notes. He lent them to Samuel Pepys, who fancied he was going to write a vast history of the Navy. Evelyn goes back to the Romans as a beginning for his reflections on the Dutch War, but Pepys was already making notes about Noah's ark. Pepys, however, with ample leisure in his retirement, was daunted by the magnitude of his task and probably realised his incompetence for authorship on such a colossal scale. But the notes were never returned. In one of Pepys's tidying-up they must have been destroyed.

It would seem that Evelyn sent materials of which he gives a long list in a letter to Pepys,\* but he makes no mention of his own notes. He describes the mass of documents he has had to read, but does not explain at all clearly in this letter why his work was cut short. Perhaps, he concludes, the world has been delivered "from a fardle of impertinences." But in another letter to Pepys† he describes the circumstances more fully, and adds, "In sum I had no thanks for what I had done and have been accounted since (I suppose) a useless fop only fit to plant coleworts, and I can't bristle, nor yet bend to mean submissions, and this, sir, is the history of your historian."

\*Letter to Samuel Pepys of December 5th, 1681.

†Letter to Samuel Pepys of April 28th, 1682.

In reading Evelyn's ponderous Introduction one cannot imagine what passage or phrase can possibly have given offence and caused its suppression. The "Holland Ambassador" must have been very particular. The explanation of the suppression would seem to be that the Ambassador thought that the history which was to follow the introduction might be embarrassing. His own country having published in good time the Dutch version of the war, he must have thought it as well to nip in the bud any effective reply by so prominent an authority. But, as we see, the susceptibilities of the French had also to be taken into account. It may be unfair to judge a projected book by its introduction, but we may doubt whether history or literature has suffered any serious loss by the non-appearance in print of Evelyn's thousand folio sheets.

Some account of Evelyn's published works must be given *seriatim*. He published his first tract when he was twenty-nine. It was the first of a number of those works of translation to which he constantly devoted his attention. There is something specially commendable in the work of a translator. He prefers with self-effacing modesty to make accessible to his fellow-countrymen a foreign work which he admires, rather than inflict himself upon them in an original attempt. Translation is neither an easy nor a light task, and the credit given to the translator never amounts to much.

This first little book dedicated to his brother George was called *Of Liberty and Servitude*, and was a

## EVELYN'S WORKS

translation from the French of De la Mothe Vayer, a sceptical and celebrated French writer, who was a friend of Molière. In a short preface Evelyn managed to introduce sufficient of his own sentiments almost to get him into trouble. "Never," he writes, "was there either heard or read of a more equal or excellent form of government than that under which we ourselves have lived during the reign of our most gracious Sovereign's Halcion days;"\* and in a pencil note on his own copy he wrote: "I was like to be called in question by the Rebels for this book, being published a few days before His Majesty's decollation," and in his Journal he notes the publication "for the preface of which I was severely threatened."

His next work of translation was ambitious, but apparently not successful. In 1656 he translated the first book of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* into English verse. He consulted his "ghostly father" Jeremy Taylor about it, who at first was rather doubtful, and hoped that by notes or by a preface Evelyn would "prepare a sufficient antidote."

"Sir," he added, "if you will give me leave, I will impose such a penance upon you for your publication of Lucretius as shall neither displease God nor you; and since you are busy in that which may minister directly to learning and indirectly to error or the confidences of men, who of themselves are apt enough to hide their vices in irreligion, I know you will be willing and will suffer yourself to be entreated to employ the same pen in the glorification of God

\**Miscellaneous Writings* (W. Upcott), 1825, p. 3 *et seq.*

and the ministries of the Eucharist and prayer.”\*

In fact, Jeremy Taylor was sorry that his friend, of whose moral and religious nature he had such a high opinion, was not engaged on a definitely religious task.

The book appeared with an attractive frontispiece designed by Mrs. Evelyn and engraved by Hollar. But the proofs were read by a friend in Evelyn's absence, and the proof-reader and printer between them made a hopeless bungle of the production. The best description of Evelyn's feelings and subsequent action is given in a letter he wrote many years later to Dr. Meric Casaubon.†

“You have already greatly obliged me by the hints you are pleased to send me and by the notice you are pleased to take of the poor essay of mine on Lucretius, so long since escaping me. You may be sure I was very young and therefore very rash, or ambitious, when I adventured upon that knotty piece. 'Tis very true that when I committed it to a friend of mine (and one I am assured you intimately know) to inspect the printing of it, in my total absence from London, I fully resolved not to tamper more with that author; but when I saw it come forth so miserably deformed and (I may say) maliciously printed and mistaken both in the Latin copy (which was a most correct and accurate one of Stephen's) and my version so inhumanly depraved, shame and indignation together incited me to resolve upon another edition; and I know not how (to charm my

\*Letter from Dr. Jeremy Taylor, April 16th, 1656.

†Letter to Dr. Meric Casaubon, July 15th, 1674.

anxious thoughts during those sad and calamitous times) to go through the five remaining books; but when I had done, I repented of my folly and that I had not taken the caution you since have given us in your excellent *Enthusiasme* and which I might have foreseen. But, to commute for this, it still lies in the dust of my study where 'tis like to be for ever buried."\*

On his own copy in the library at Wotton House he wrote:

"Never was a book so abominably misused by printer, never copy so negligently surveyed by one who undertook to look over the proof-sheets with all exactness and care, namely Dr. Triplet, well known for his ability and who pretended to oblige me in my absence, and so readily offered himself. This good yet I received by it, that publishing it vainly, its ill success at the printer's discouraged me with troubling the world with the rest."†

Yet, Edmund Waller the poet thought well of Evelyn's effort. Praise from him may not have had very much value. When, after having written a panegyric of Cromwell, he wrote a eulogy of Charles II, and the King complained that the poem to Cromwell was the better of the two, Waller replied: "Sir, we poets never succeed so well in writing truth as fiction." At any rate, Waller composed a poem, "To his Worthy Friend, Master Evelyn upon his translation of Lucretius."

\*Letter to Dr. Meric Casaubon, July 15th, 1674.

†*Diary of John Evelyn*. Austin Dobson edition, 1906. Vol. II, p. 111, n.

JOHN EVELYN

“Lucretius (with a stork-like fate  
Born and translated in a state)  
Comes to proclaim, in English verse,  
No monarch rules the universe;  
But chance and atoms make this All  
In order democratical,  
Where bodies freely run their course,  
Without design or fate or force.  
And this in such a strain he sings,  
As if his muse, with angels’ wings,  
Had soared beyond our atmosphere,  
And other worlds discovered there;  
For his immortal, boundless wit,  
To Nature does no bounds permit,  
But boldly has removed those bars.  
Of heaven and earth and sea and stars,  
By which they were before supposed,  
By narrow wits to be enclosed  
Till his free muse threw down the pale,  
And did at once dispark them all.  
So vast this argument did seem,  
That the wise author did esteem  
The Roman language (which was spread  
O’er the whole world, in triumph led)  
A tongue too narrow to unfold  
The wonders which he would have told.  
This speaks thy glory noble friend.  
And British language does commend;  
For here Lucretius whole we find,  
His words his music and his mind.  
Thy art has to our country brought  
All that he writ and all he thought.  
Ovid translated, Virgil too  
Showed long since what our tongue could do;  
Nor Lucan we, nor Horace spared  
Only Lucretius was too hard.

Lucretius like a fort doth stand  
 Untouched, till your victorious hand  
 Did from his head this garland bear,  
 Which now upon your own you wear;  
 A garland! Made of such new bays  
 And sought in such untrodden ways,  
 As no man's temples e'er did crown,  
 Save this great author's and your own."

In 1659 his translation from the Greek of *The Golden Book of St. John Chrysostom concerning the Education of Children* was published, and dedicated "to both my brothers to comfort them on the loss of their children." But he wrote it chiefly as consolation for himself on the loss of his own son Richard. In the Epistle dedicatory to his two brothers George and Richard he writes: "of all the afflictions which can touch the heart in this life, one of the most superlative is the loss of a hopeful child . . . whilst I erect to my dear child no other monument, I show to the world how nearly I concurred with the instructions of this Golden Book (before I had seen it)," and he describes at some length the talents of the infant prodigy (containing page after page) until at last he says, "But my tears mingle so fast with my ink, that I must break off here, and be silent." Again there was trouble with the printer over the translation of Gabriel Naudé's *Avis pour dresser une Bibliothèque*, 1627, which Evelyn presented to the Lord Chancellor in 1661.\* "It was," he writes in his Journal, "miserably

\**Instructions concerning Erecting of a Library: presented to My Lord President de Mesme. By Gabriel Naudens, P. and now interpreted by Jo. Evelyn Esquire. London, 1661.*

false printed." Pepys received a copy and tried to read it. His comment in his diary (October 5th, 1665) was: "Reading a book of Mr. Evelyn's translating . . . about directions for gathering a Library; but the book is above my reach."

Each time there appears to be a sense of duty in his efforts at translation. Some purpose was to be served, some need for the words of the classical or foreign authority to be reproduced. Labouring with the ideas of others seemed to give him more pleasure than giving free rein to his own.

Three more translations must be mentioned. *Parallel of Antient Architecture with Modern*, by Roland Freart, Sieur de Chambray. This was accompanied by an Epistle dedicatory addressed to the King, who is referred to as "so Royal a Builder whose august attempts have given so great a splendour to our imperial city." This, for once in a way, was not a wild exaggeration. By the end of his reign, indeed, it was certainly true. He mentions that Whitehall and Westminster Hall had been repaired, Somerset House had been enlarged, and Greenwich was being planned, but later he would have been able to add to his list the new St. Paul's, the City Churches and Chelsea Hospital—in fact all Wren's great work. In a second letter to the Surveyor of His Majesty's buildings and works, Sir John Denham, Evelyn shows what a keen town-planner he was. After praising the new pavements of London, he speaks of "the public and useful work" to be done in building and concludes:

“so that if there remain but one thing more to be desired in order to the consummation of its perfect felicity, how infinitely were it to be wished, that whilst the beauty and benefit of the city increased in one part, the deformity and apparent ruin of it might cease on the other; but this we are to hope for when, to bring this monstrous body into shape and scatter these ungovernable enormities, either the restraint of building irregularly shall polish the suburbs or (which I rather could wish) some royal purchase contract and demolish them.”

This translation appeared in 1664, was republished in 1669, and in 1697 Evelyn brought out another edition, adding to it a considerable essay of his own, “An account of Architects and Architecture,” with a prefatory address to Sir Christopher Wren. In this address there is an interesting reference to St. Paul’s.

“I have named St. Paul’s and truly not without admiration, as oft as I call to mind (as frequently I do) the sad and deplorable condition it was in when (after it had been made a stable of horses and a den of thieves) you, with other gentlemen and myself were by the late King Charles named Commissioners to survey the dilapidations and to make report to His Majesty in order to a speedy reparation. You will not, I am sure, forget the struggle we had with some who were for patching it up anyhow (so the steeple might stand) instead of new building which it altogether needed; when (to put an end to the contest) five days after that dreadful conflagration happened out of whose ashes this Phoenix is risen and was by providence designed for you: the

circumstance is too remarkable that I could not pass it over without notice."

His essay consists largely of an elaborate treatise on various technical architectural terms. He constantly quotes Vitruvius, the earliest authority on classical architecture, and many other authors. We find ourselves wishing again here that Evelyn could have managed to adapt his profound knowledge and present it in such a form as to make it more appetising to the general reader.

He waxes eloquent and, indeed, almost violent in his condemnation of Gothic architecture, as compared with the ancient or classical. He describes it as "conjestions of heavy, dark, melancholy and monkish piles without any just proportion, use or beauty" . . . "gaudy sculpture, trite and busy carvings . . . such as rather gluts the eye than gratifies and pleases it with any reasonable satisfaction." He compares Henry VII's Chapel at Westminster with "its sharp angles, jetties, narrow lights, lame statues, lace and other cut work and crinkle crinkle," with the Banqueting Hall of Whitehall with its classical simplicity. And, after again emphasising that "nonsensical insertions of various marbles impertinently placed, turrets and pinnacles thick-set with monkeys and chimeras (and abundance of busy work and other incongruities) dissipate and break the angles of the sight and so confound it, that one cannot consider it with any steadiness where to begin or end," and he enumerates the chief English and

Continental Cathedrals as instances of "mountains of stone," "not worthy the name of architecture."

There can be no doubt that Evelyn here is expressing the view which Wren and his fellow-architects were carrying out in practice, and that he himself had changed the view he held of our cathedrals when he travelled about as a young man.

Lord Cornbury and his father Lord Clarendon were responsible for Evelyn's translation from the French of *The Mystery of Jesuitism* which he published in 1664. For this he received the King's thanks; "he said he had carried (it) two days in his pocket, read it and encouraged me, at which I did not a little wonder."

In his preface to his last translation, which was of Roland Freart's *Idea of the Perfection of painting demonstrated from the Principles of Art* (published in 1668), he writes: "I did once think, and absolutely resolve, that I had for ever done with the drudgery of translating of books (though I am still of opinion that it were a far better and more profitable work to be still digging in that mine than to multiply the number of ill ones by productions of my own)." The dedication was to Henry Howard, who had presented the Arundel marbles to the University of Oxford.

*A Character of England*, which was one of his earliest original efforts, was a satire he wrote in the assumed form of a translation from the French.\* He is

\*Upcott dates it 1651, but the date of the known edition (1659) is probably more correct.

certainly unsparing in his condemnation of the manners and customs of his native land; but we must remember that both the institutions and the habits of the people which Evelyn was ready enough to condemn wholesale were those of what he regarded as the iniquitous and perilous days of the Commonwealth. Speed on the roads seems to have been a trouble even at that date. "All Englishmen ride so fast upon the road that you would swear there were some enemy in the ariere; and all coaches in London seem to drive for midwives." This satire on the social life and follies of the English as they might be supposed to strike a foreigner travelling in this country was a success. It went into three editions and was translated into French. Hallam\* thought it "very severe on our manners," but he commends it for "the polish and gentlemanly elegance of the style which very few had hitherto regarded in such light compositions." Evelyn notes in his diary that Princess Henrietta graciously accepted a copy of the tract from his wife. It was answered by an anonymous production entitled, *Gallus Castratus*, comparing French life unfavourably with English.

In the form of a letter to a friend, he published, in 1652, "a detailed account of the State of France, as it stood in the ninth year of this present monarch, Louis XIV." The letter consists of a series of brief notes on the royal family, the court, the officials, the military forces, the Church and, indeed, on every institution and custom, as well as descriptions of the

\*Introduction to *Literature of Europe*.

buildings of Paris and the education and humours of the people. It certainly had value from the fact that it was drawn up from personal observation. One extract may be given in which he summarises the character of the French people:

“The passions of the people are suddenly imparted and puffed up with a victory, and as soon dejected with the least repulse or loss. They are prodigal and splendid in externals but seldom undo themselves in housekeeping and hospitality; the best sort eat like princes, and far exceed our table; the common worse than dogs. . . . They are exceedingly courteous and have generally their tongues well hung; which promptitude of theirs, as it becomes them well in encounter, so they are for the most part of jovial conversation and far from that constrained address which is natural to our sullen nation who never think ourselves acquainted, till we treat one another with Jack and Tom; familiarities which, as we find nowhere else in use, so they commonly terminate in vain and rude associations. The French are the sole nation in Europe that do idolise their sovereign. . . .”

In his preface he discourses on foreign travel, in which from experience he was a great believer. He writes:

“what first moved me to this apodemick humour was a certain vain emulation which I had to see the best education which everybody so decrying at home, made me conceive was a commodity only to be brought from a far country; and I cannot say without a little ambition too of knowing or at least having the

privilege to *talk* something more than others could reasonably pretend to that had never been out of sight of their own chimney's smoke."

He also declares: "It is not the counting of steeples and making tours, but this ethical and moral part of travel which embellisheth a gentleman."

It was very courageous of Evelyn to issue *An Apology for the Royal Party*, in 1659, when, as he himself admits, "it was capital to speak or write" in favour of the King. The tract sold so well that it was twice reprinted in the year. He followed this up in the next year by an exposure of a forgery entitled, "News from Brussels in a Letter from a near attendant on His Majesty's person, to a person of honour here," which Evelyn called, *The late news from Brussels unmasked*. He hits out against the anonymous forger with great spirit. He was very ill at the time, but in loyalty he thought it his duty to reply at once. He notes in his Diary:

"I writ and printed a letter in defence of His Majesty against a wicked forged paper pretended to be sent from Brussels to defame His Majesty's person and virtues and render him odious now when everybody was in hope and expectation of the General and Parliament recalling him and establishing the Government on its ancient and right basis."

*Fumifugium: or the aer and smoak of London dissipated. Together with some Remedies humbly proposed*, published in 1661, was republished at the end of the eighteenth century and several times since, the last edition

appearing as lately as 1933. The "prodigious annoyance" to which Evelyn drew public attention not having yet been removed, those who are fighting the smoke nuisance even now like to preface their arguments with quotations from the pen of a seventeenth-century Londoner. In his dedicatory letter to the King he begins:

"It was one day as I was walking in your Majesty's palace of Whitehall (where I have sometimes the honour to refresh myself with the sight of your illustrious presence, which is the joy of your people's hearts) that a presumptuous smoke issuing from one or two tunnels near Northumberland House and not far from Scotland Yard, did so invade the court, that all the rooms, galleries, and places about it were filled and infested with it; and that to such a degree, as men could hardly discern one another for the cloud, and none could support without manifest inconvenience. It was not this which did first suggest to me what I had long since conceived against this pernicious accident upon frequent observation, but it was this alone and the trouble it must needs procure to your Sacred Majesty as well as hazard to your health which kindled this indignation of mine against it and was the occasion of what it has produced in these papers."

He declares "the evil is so epidemical, indangering as well the health of your subjects as it sullies the glory of this your imperial seat." In his exordium to the reader he states his case:

"That this glorious and ancient city which from wood might be rendered brick and (like another

Rome) from brick made stone and marble; which commands the proud ocean from the Indies and reaches the furthest Antipodes, should wrap her stately head in clouds of smoke and sulphur, so full of stink and darkness, I deplore with just indignation."

"For where in all other places," he writes in the Essay itself:

"the Air is most serene and pure, it is here eclipsed with such a cloud of sulphur, as the Sun itself, which gives day to all the world besides, is hardly able to penetrate and impart it here; and the weary traveller, at many miles distance sooner smells than sees the City to which he repairs. This is that pernicious smoke which sullies all her glory, super-inducing a sooty crust or fur upon all that it lights, spoiling the moveables, tarnishing the plate, gildings and furniture and corroding the very iron bars and hardest stones with those piercing and acrimonious spirits which accompany its sulphur; and executing more in one year, than exposed to the pure Air of the country it could affect in some hundreds."

He enlarges on its effects on health and asks, "is there under heaven such coughing and snuffing to be heard, as in the London Churches and assemblies of people where the barking and spitting is incessant and most importunate?" He inveighs against coal, but admits that to serve the whole City with wood would be impossible. His chief recommendation is the removal of factories and works from the City. On this he waxes eloquent, and the passage in which he describes "the tunnels of smoak," which "draw a

sable curtain over heaven . . .” has particularly eloquent rhythm. Quotation of part of one of his immense sentences must suffice:

“the columns and clouds of smoke which are belched forth from the sooty throats of those works, are so thick and plentiful, that rushing out with great impetuosity, they are capable even to resist the fiercest winds, and being extremely surcharged with a fuliginous body, fall down upon the City, before they can be dissipated, as the more thin and weak is; so as two or three of these *fumid vortices* are able to whirl it about the whole City, rendering it in a few moments like a picture of Troy sacked by the Greeks or the approaches of Mount Hecla.”

He has a word to say about the “horrid stinks, niderous and unwholesome smells,” which come from the premises of chandlers, butchers, fishmongers, etc., and he would like to see them as well as the prisons and common gaols removed to a distance. “But, if the avarice of the men of this age,” he adds, “be so far deplorable that we may not hope for so absolute a cure of all that is offensive; at least let such whose works are upon the margin of the Thames and which are, indeed, the most intolerable, be banished further off, and not once dare to approach that silver channel (but at the distance prescribed), which glides by her stately palaces and irrigates her welcome banks.”

We may laugh at his further recommendation, which may seem more than ever now like a fantastic dream, namely, to plant sweet-smelling flowers and

shrubs in large quantities in and around the City so as to make it "one of the sweetest and most delicious habitations in the world." His list of flowers alone gives the most delightful aroma to this fascinating dream. In the fields divided by hedges of sweet briar there were to be planted periclymena, woodbine, jessamine, syringa, guelder rose, musk, other roses, juniper, lavender and above all rosemary. It is not absolutely inconceivable that in remote centuries to come when the mania for the crowded, pest-infested and overgrown city has been abandoned, that Evelyn's words to the King may once more be remembered.

He has a recollection which he records:

"Those who take notice of the scent of the orange flowers from the rivage of Genoa and St. Pietro dell' Arena; the blossoms of the rosemary from the coasts of Spain, many leagues off at sea; or the manifest and odoriferous wafts which flow from Fontenay and Vaugirard, even to Paris in the season of roses, with the contrary effects of those less pleasing smells from other accidents, will easily consent to what I suggest; and I am able to enumerate a catalogue of native plants and such as are familiar to our country and clime, whose redolent and agreeable emissions would even ravish our senses as well as perfectly improve and meliorate the air about London."

*Fumifugium* was a success. Charles II liked it. On October 1st, 1665, Evelyn tells us in his Diary he was on the river with the King, who was having a sailing match with the Duke of York from Greenwich to

Gravesend for £100. He dined with the King in his yacht afterwards. "In this passage he was pleased to discourse to me about my book inveighing against the nuisance of the smoke of London and proposing expedients how, by removing those particulars I mentioned, it might be reformed; commanding me to prepare a Bill against the next session of Parliament being as he said resolved to have something done in it."

The royal enthusiasm, however, only ended in smoke. Nevertheless, this contribution from Evelyn to his subject stands out as one of his lighter and more readable literary productions, containing as it does passages of charming eloquence.

A curious pamphlet entitled, *Tyrannus or the Mode*, was published by Evelyn in 1661.\* It consists of a plea that England should free itself from the French fashions in clothes which were imposed on it, and that the King should initiate a new costume which could be copied everywhere. The author has a great deal to say on the importance of clothes, and goes so far as to declare that "the Swiss had not been now a nation, but for keeping to their prodigious Breeches." He ridicules the French costume which was the fashion of the day:

"It was a fine silken thing which I spied walking the other day through Westminster Hall that had as much Ribbon about him as would have plundered six shops and set up twenty country Pedlars; all his

\*Only printed in the 1818 edition (Vol. II) of *Evelyn's Diary and Papers*, edited by William Bray.

body was dressed like a Maypole or a Tom o' Bedlam's Cap. A frigate newly rigged kept not half such a clatter in a storm as this Puppet's Streamers did when the Wind was in his Shrouds; the Motion was wonderful to behold, and the well-chosen colours were Red, Orange and Blue, of well-gummed Satin which argued a happy fancy."

So mad were people about French fashions that a Frenchwoman of his acquaintance protested that "the English did so torment her for the *Mode*, still jealous lest she should not have brought them over the newest edition of it, that she used monthly to devise us new Fancies of her own head which were never worn in France, to pacify her customers."

Evelyn wants "a virile and comely fashion" which would be constant. "What have we to do with these foreign Butterflies?" he exclaims. "In God's name let the change be our own, not borrowed of others; for why should I dance after a Monsieur Flagolet only, that have a set of English Viols for my concert?"

He gives his own recommendations with some detail. Only the opening passage need be quoted:

"I would choose the loose Riding Coat, which is now the Mode and the hose which His Majesty often wears, or some fashion not so pinching as to need a Shooing-horn with the Dons, nor so exorbitant as the Pantaloons, which are a kind of Hermaphrodite and of neither sex. . . . I like the noble Buskin for the Legs and the Boucle better then the formal rose; and had rather see a glittering stone to hasp it there than the long cross hilted knots now worn, because 'tis more glorious."

For a hat he prefers the *Buckingamo* or *Montero*, the Band or Cravat something soft, and so on.

Evelyn corrected this brochure for a second edition, and added the following note:—

“Note—that this was published two years before the Vest, Cravat, Garters and Boucles came to be the fashion and therefore might haply give occasion to the change that ensued in those very particulars.”

The entry in the diary describing the sudden change of fashion is dated 18th October, 1666.

“To court. It being the first time His Majesty put himself solemnly into the Eastern fashion of vest, changing doublet, stiff collar, bands and cloak, into a comely dress, after the Persian mode, with girdles or straps, and shoe-strings and garters into buckles, of which some were set with precious stones, resolving never to alter it, and to leave the French mode, which had hitherto obtained to our great expense and reproach. Upon which, divers courtiers and gentlemen gave His Majesty gold by way of wager that he would not persist in this resolution. I had sometime before presented an invective against that unconstancy, and our so much affecting the French fashion, to His Majesty; in which I took occasion to describe the comeliness and usefulness of the Persian clothing, in the very same manner His Majesty now clad himself. This pamphlet I entitled *Tyrannus, or the Mode*, and gave it to the King to read. I do not impute to this discourse the change which soon happened, but it was an identity that I could not but take notice of.”

JOHN EVELYN

This Persian costume, Charles said, made his courtiers look like magpies. It was soon abandoned.

In reading *Sculptura*, or the History and Art of Chalcography and Engraving on Copper, Evelyn's defects as a writer are very apparent. They come from his inability to construct any proper plan for his work, his faulty powers of exposition, and his almost ridiculously overloaded language. At the same time the list of some hundred authorities which he had studied shows the enormous pains he took in mastering his subject, which he compresses into the very inadequate compass of some eighty quarto pages. How easy it is to-day, with the aid of catalogues, catalogues of catalogues, subject indexes, and wonderfully arranged libraries, not only to have access to almost any book ever printed, but to find out what authorities should be read! In the middle of the seventeenth century research and preparation were infinitely more difficult and toilsome.

In later years Evelyn complains in a letter to Pepys (September 2nd, 1694) of the excessive number of books and the difficulty of finding those which he required, and he wishes "some benefactor would give us such a catalogue of authors as were only and absolutely and fully effectual to the attaining of such a competency of practical useful and speculative knowledge, too, as one might hope to benefit by within the ordinary circles of one's life without being bewildered and quite out of the way when one should be gotten home."

Books enough he possessed himself, and he would

seem to have been anxious to use as many of them as he could whenever he wrote. In *Sculptura* he sets to work with characteristic thoroughness; and with a naïveté which is really surprising he conscientiously begins not with the Greeks or the Romans nor even the Egyptians, but with Adam. Somehow, one hardly expects the credulity exposed in passages such as the following, although this and some other passages may be just deliberate bits of fantasy:

"Thos. Aquinas . . . speaks of a volume of plants described by Adam; and there are traditions of a whole Natural History, with several other works of this most learned of all men living, as Guidas doubts not to call him; nor do we think that his unhappy fall did so much concern his rare and infused habits, as not to leave him the most accomplished and perfectly instructed in all those arts which were so highly necessary and therefore thus early invented . . . ."

After Noah, "in Moses we have the tables of stone engraven by the finger of God himself," and the commandment, "thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," shows that sculpture was of much greater antiquity.

The pamphlet is composed of a catalogue of the most renowned masters of sculpture and engraving, and includes medallists and chart engravers. He pleads for more engravings of the great collections in the country, and more "landskips" and prospects "of our nobly situated metropolis, Greenwich, Windsor, and other parts upon the good Thames; and in

which Mr. Hollar has so worthily merited and other countries abound with, to the immense refreshment of the curious and honour of the industrious artist." In a concluding chapter he refers to the method of engraving in mezzotinto invented and communicated by Prince Rupert with a plate the Prince had engraved himself. In recording in his diary that Prince Rupert had shown him this new method with his own hands (13th March, 1661) Evelyn adds: "This set so many artists on work that they soon arrived at that perfection it is since come to, emulating the tenderest miniatures." But in his own pamphlet he gives no sort of indication or instruction as to the process. In fact Horace Walpole makes the following comment:\* "One cannot help wondering that so beneficent a nature as Mr. Evelyn's should juggle with mankind, when the inventor himself had consented that the new art should be made public." However, Evelyn showed it all to Pepys, who thought it "very pretty."

In 1669 he published *The History of the three late Imposters* (Padre Ottomano, Mahomed Bei and Sabate Savi). The fantastic appealed to Evelyn and he was anxious to expose fraud. But he was liable himself to swallow tall tales rather easily. At any rate in the absurd stories of these men which he must have picked up by hearsay there is nothing to arrest our attention.

His daughter Mary is supposed to have helped him with a curious little burlesque published in 1690, entitled *Mundus Muliebris* (or The Ladies' Dressing-

\**Catalogue of Engravers.*

room unlocked, and her toilette spread, together with the fop-dictionary), or rather it would seem from his notes in the Diary that she had written it some years before, and that five years after her death he prepared it for the Press with a preface.

Everyone of a certain age who writes about fashions is a *laudator temporis acti*, and every generation which divulges the secrets of the ladies' toilet only shows that *plus ça change plus c'est la même chose*.

There is a great deal about unguents and cosmetics, and all the various complicated appendages for make-up. A few lines may be quoted:

“Twelve dozen *Martial*\* whole and half  
Of jonquil, tuberose (don't laugh)  
Frangissan, orange, violett,  
Narcissus, jassamine ambrett:  
And some of chicken skin for night,  
To keep her hands plump, soft and white:  
*Mondus* for pushes, to be sure,  
From Paris the *très fine* procure,  
And Spanish paper, lip and cheek,  
With spittle sweetly to belick:  
Nor therefore spare in the next place,  
The pocket *sprunking*† looking-glass:  
*Calembuc*‡ combs in *pulvil*§ case  
To set and trim the hair and face:  
And that the cheeks may both agree  
Plumpers|| to fill the cavity . . .”

\*French glover and perfumer.

†Dutch term for trimming.

‡A precious wood.

§Portuguese term for the most exquisite powder.

||Round light balls “much used by old Court Countesses.”

Forty years later Swift wrote on the same theme in a clever but very disgusting poem called *The Lady's Dressing-room*.<sup>\*</sup> It begins:

“Five hours (and who can do it less in?)  
By haughty Celia spent in dressing;  
The goddess from her chamber issues  
Arrayed in lace brocade and tissues.

Strephon who found the room was void,  
And Betty otherwise employed,  
Stole in and took a strict survey  
Of all the litter as it lay.”

But the inventory which follows has a repulsive realism which Evelyn and his daughter were careful to avoid.

*Numismata*, a treatise on medals, “to which is added a digression concerning physiognomy,” published in 1697, must be regarded as one of Evelyn’s failures, although he was in correspondence with his publisher, Benjamin Tooke, for three years making arrangements for its publication and for the engravings it contains. He asked that great care should be taken in supervising the printing, and was so angry when he found it full of blunders that he wanted to insert in the preface this sentence, “Finding it so miserably deformed through the confident undertakers.” But he was persuaded not to do this. Horace Walpole rightly complains that there was nothing about British medallists in the book, and then turns to the elaborate index which Evelyn had prepared and

<sup>\*</sup>*Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1732.

# EVELYN'S WORKS

finds an amusing but extreme instance of Evelyn's incorrigible habit of introducing irrelevant matter. Walpole writes: "I turned to the Index and to my greatest surprise found almost everything but what I wanted. In the single letter N which contains but twenty-six articles are the following subjects which I believe would puzzle any man to guess how they found their way into a discourse on medals:

Nails of the Cross	Nations, whence of such
Narcotics	various dispositions.
Natural and artificial	Nightingale
curiosity.	Noah
Navigation	Noses
Neapolitans, their	Nurses, of what importance
character	their temper and
Negros	disposition."
Neocros	

*Numismata* was never reprinted. There is a copy of it *ex dono auctoris* in the College Library at Balliol. This must have been sent after Dr. Thomas Good, the Master, had written a very curt letter to Evelyn in December, 1675, reproaching him for not visiting his old college, and adding, "besides, you have printed several books, and not bestowed one of them upon our college library." Evelyn replied that he did not think his books "considerable enough to make any present of." Later, he sent £20 as the college was in low water, and it seems that when *Numismata* was published in 1691 he sent a copy to the Balliol College Library.

His paper "Of Manuscripts" was never finished.

It deals with what he learnt from his own experience about lost and destroyed manuscripts, their discovery in unexpected places and how a single sheet is worth keeping. There are paragraphs on the different scripts, abbreviations in shorthand, printing ink and illumination, and there is a recipe of "beaten gall and white wine for recovering the faded writing on ancient parchments." In dealing with printing he particularly "perstrings" . . . "a late custom beginning to obtain among us of putting the Title pages of Latin Books in black Gothic letter, which, while I look upon as the impertinence of the Printer only, I cannot impute to any affectedness of the learned Author because it is plainly barbarous and by no means suitable."

According to one of his lists Evelyn had treatises, papers, and perhaps books in preparation on "The Dignity of Man," "Of Stones," "Of Reason in Brute Animals," "The Legend of the Pearl," "Animadversions on Spinoza," "Papers concerning Education," and "Mathematical Papers."\*

Evelyn's range was far too wide. He dissipated his energies on subjects which attracted his lively mind, but which he had no time nor, indeed, aptitude to master fully. But he was built that way. On gardening and trees he was an acknowledged authority. His writings on those subjects must have a chapter to themselves.

Evelyn's prose is often difficult to read, but the same may be said of the writing of his more ex-

\**Diary*. Austin Dobson edition, Vol. III, p. 380.

clusively literary contemporaries. Words change their meaning, or perhaps, the meaning becomes modified in the course of time. We are prepared for this, in the use Evelyn makes of such words as his very favourite word "impertinences" ("a number of other impertinences of my own life"), meaning business or occupation; the use of "staunch" for strong ("a staunch and pretty parquet"), "typographical escapes" for printers' errors (also used by Jeremy Taylor). These are very pleasing, and nicest of all is, "begin to peep" for plants or flowers showing their first shoots above ground. We cannot be sure that words he uses may not have dropped out of use, or rather perhaps out of common use. When he writes that Margaret Godolphin's transports cannot be described as "Raptures and Illapses," the words seem unusual, but both can be found in any modern dictionary. He calls his fondness for travel his "apodemick humour"; this is a Greek word he was attempting to introduce. He makes use of French words without his favourite italics, such for instance as "funest" and "ariere." When he writes "there is a mediocrity in all things," meaning a middle course, he is more correct than we in using the word with its modern significance. The use of "analogy" for agreement was common in his day. When, in *Tyrannus*, he writes of a man who "had as much ribbon about him as would have plundered six shops," the grammar may seem peculiar, but it must be remembered that "plunder" was a more or less new word and still had a rather unfixed meaning.

Grammatical peculiarities of this sort abound, but they do not in the least signify; on the contrary, they attract.

It would be a mistake to suppose that Evelyn used bad grammar, or words with their wrong meaning. A student of seventeenth-century writing will recognise that he had the courage to introduce some foreign words, and we are indebted to him for the enrichment of our vocabulary with such words as: *balustrade*, *cascade*, *opera*, *outline*, *altitude*, *pastil*, *monochrome*, etc. Indeed, he had very strong views on words and language, as he shows in his letter to Sir Peter Wyche, who acted as chairman of a Committee of the Royal Society appointed to consider the improvement of the English tongue. In addition to Evelyn, Dryden, Waller, Godolphin, Sprat, Southwell, Williamson and Matthew Wren were members of the Committee. Evelyn wrote because other business prevented his attendance. He considered the additions to and corruptions of the English language had arisen "from victories, plantations, frontiers, staples of commerce, pedantry of schools, affectation of travellers, translations, fancy and style of Court, vernility and mincing of citizens, pulpits, political remonstrances, theatres, shops, etc." He proposes that a grammar should be compiled, that spelling should be simplified and pronunciation fixed, that a lexicon of pure English words should be compiled showing also technical words and "exotic" words. He is in favour of the introduction of some of these latter being judiciously controlled. "In this choice there would

be some regard had to the well sounding and more harmonious words; and such as are numerous and apt to fall gracefully into their cadences and periods, and so recommend themselves at the very first sight as it were; others which (like false stones) will never shine, in whatever light they be placed, but embase the rest." As to the introduction of French and Italian words he says: "Let us therefore make as many of these do homage as are likely to prove good citizens." He was under the impression that the Royal Society—that is to say the learned men of the time—had it in their power to control our language and decide what words should be expunged and what added.

Putting aside grammar, phrases and words, Evelyn's style, although admired, was often apt to be heavy. His obscurity was caused more by his form than by his meaning.

Although Jeremy Taylor's sentences may sometimes have been as long as Evelyn's, they were not so much involved, and they had real eloquence. As Mr. Pearsall Smith says,\* "the fullness, overflow, superfluity which Coleridge notes in Jeremy Taylor's prose, the over-abundant piling up of clauses, words and epithets provides nevertheless, in his happier passages that richness of organ music which gives a certain splendour to our older prose and makes our modern way of writing sometimes seem short-breathed and jejune in comparison."

In Evelyn's writing there is not often any richness

\* *Jeremy Taylor. Select Passages.* L. Pearsall Smith, 1930.

or grandeur, nor had he even Pepys's aptitude for concise, almost epigrammatic statement. There would seem to be something in his confession that his early education was inadequate, and that, in spite of his wonderful concentration or self-education, there were certain of the rudiments he never quite mastered. He ploughs on conscientiously, endeavouring to exhibit all he knows, being bent on the substance and oblivious of the form. At times one may fail even to understand what he is driving at. Long, involved sentences clogged with classical and historical illustrations, weighed down by quotations from high authorities, and over-decorated with strings of epithets must have prevented many a reader from turning over the next page. Boyle, however, refers to Evelyn's style as "so justly esteemed"; and we must remember that, generally speaking, we find the average seventeenth-century prose literature or scientific discourses too stilted in construction and over-elaborated for modern taste. One feels that the apology Evelyn makes in one of his letters might be extended to some of his writings: "I have set things down tumultuarily as they came into my sudden thoughts."

It would seem as if he had too much luggage to travel easily, and one often finds it difficult to follow him or wait for him. His discursiveness sometimes frankly bores one or makes one impatient. Yet in the midst of all this heaviness, patience will be rewarded by the discovery of striking passages of wisdom and eloquence and of thoughts simply expressed with

the peculiar charm indicative not only of an enlightened mind but of a high-minded personality. In his correspondence and more especially in his Journal these passages are more frequent because in them he seems less oppressed by the weight of his learning and freer to be natural.

His parentheses at times become so involved and long that they seem to produce nothing but a tangle. His habit of frequent digression is apt to be tiresome. In one of his prefaces he rightly calls it "transgression": "To conclude, sir, and contract this tedious transgression."\* He was sometimes unable to co-ordinate the information he had collected but would plunge in without any clear plan. With all his reading he was not really an accurate scholar nor had he a disciplined mind. He was attracted by science and philosophy and made no attempt to acquire a literary style. His motto was characteristic: "*Explorate omnia meliora retinete.*"

Nevertheless, with all this adverse criticism—little of which applies to his books on gardening—we find many pages in which we are charmed by his zeal, even though we may not always approve or even follow his argument. But most of all it is with delight that we come on his wonderfully descriptive phrases: his horse-chestnut "is turgid with buds and ready to explain itself," his condemnation of chestnut wood as not being "sincere"; when Margaret Godolphin leaves the court, "how dim the tapers burned as she passed the ante-chamber!" Frenchmen

\*Letter on the state of France.

“have generally their tongues well hung,” and so on. There are many such plums, and one alights on them unexpectedly, sometimes when the cake seems rather stodgy.

Yet even if we had no page of his very readable Diary, his writings would give us quite a good picture of the man. We can see his loyalty to the monarchy, his industrious absorption in his pursuits, his capacity for ceaseless work, his primary love of gardens and of nature, the over-wide range of his numberless interests and hobbies, the burden of his stored but ill-assorted knowledge, his unusual but restricted talents, his recognition of the frivolous, his appreciation of the subtle, his constant attempt to reach beyond the superficial and discover the real and something too of his moral rectitude as well as of his easy gullibility. But with all this we have to recognise a certain strain in his efforts to express his thoughts and handle his material, and owing to this, the manner which attracted so many friends, and the wit which he was said to possess, are often smothered in a conscientious and sometimes tedious endeavour to make his inadequate powers of expression in writing serve his lively mind.

## CHAPTER IX

### PANEGYRICS

THE fulsome eulogies known in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as panegyrics appear to us as merely absurd, and we can hardly understand any writers of intelligence devoting themselves to this form of writing. But they did; and they vied with one another in piling up superlatives and profusions of compliments, and stretching hyperbole to its furthest limit of fantasy. It was just the same in France and elsewhere. "*Accourez chastes nymphes de Parnasse,*" writes Boileau, celebrating the Grand Monarch. "*Des sons que ma lyre enfante marquez en bien la cadence, et vous vents faites silence! Je vais parler de Louis!*" Addison and Congreve at a later date were still capable of producing this kind of flattery, while monumental masons had their work cut out for them—or rather had to cut out their own work in the form of immense epitaphs on large marble slabs.

Without counting Evelyn's notice in verse to the second edition of Sir Samuel Tuke's adaptation of Calderon's play, *The Adventure of Five Hours*, which began:

"You in five hours have here performed more  
Than in five ages all our bards before,"

there are three notable instances of his indulging in this form of writing: to the King, to the Duchess of Newcastle, and in his life of Margaret Godolphin.

His panegyric to Charles II was presented "on the day of his inauguration," April 23rd, 1661 (i.e. Coronation).\*

The King inquired nervously whether it was in Latin, and secondly whether it was long. It was in English, but it occupied thirteen folio pages. It was no effort to Evelyn to write this sort of thing. In his epistle dedicated to Charles, which accompanied the translation of Freart's treatise on Architecture, he writes: "It is hard not to slide into the panegyric when once one begins to speak of Your Majesty."

Of course he attributes all the virtues to him: Courage, Fortitude, Piety, Prudence, Temperance, etc., and most of all "Constancy to your religion," which proved to be a remarkably bad shot. When he gets fairly going we find passages which it is difficult to believe that any intelligent man could write:

"O happy Greece for Eloquence that has celebrated the fortune of thy Heroes trifling adventured! Who shall set forth and immortalise the Glory of our illustrious Prince and advance Great CHARLES to the Skies?

. . . Your Majesty is as secure from flattery as your virtues are above its reach."

Given the fashion of the day, there is ample excuse

\*Brit. Mus. C. 57.g.33. It has not been reprinted and is only available in the original edition.

for this outburst of servility towards the King, for whom at the time of his restoration to the throne Evelyn had a perfectly genuine admiration.

But his attitude towards the fantastic Duchess of Newcastle was either just humbug—which is not consistent with his character—or it is an illustration of his defective judgment of character and merit.

It is true that he was not alone in taking this lady seriously, but none of the panegyrics of her life and works can surpass in extravagance his letter to her, acknowledging the gift of her writings. We should like to regard it as pure banter, an attempt to see how much she would swallow; but his references to her in the Diary when he visits her are quite serious, and he is much pleased with her fanciful garb and discourse. There is a volume consisting of "A collection of letters and Poems written by several persons of honour and learning upon divers important subjects to the late Duke and Duchess of Newcastle, London, 1678," showing that prominent people, Masters and Fellows of Colleges and learned doctors joined in the chorus of praise. The Duchess kept a bevy of maids of honour obliged to be ready at all hours "to register her Grace's conceptions," and Horace Walpole tells that "Ideas would come to her suddenly at night. She would shout 'John, I conceive,' whereupon John Rolleston (her husband's secretary) had to rise and commit to writing the offspring of his mistress's reveries." This sounds quite amusing, and what Walpole calls "her unbounded passion for scribbling" might have resulted in fantasies of

humorously eccentric but real merit. Charles Lamb was on the side of the eulogists and said of her life of the Duke that "no casket is rich enough, no case sufficiently durable to honour and keep soft such a jewel." Pepys may not have had literary judgment, but we cannot help thinking he was nearer the mark when he said of the same book, "The ridiculous history of my Lord Newcastle writ by his wife, which shows her to be a mad, conceited, ridiculous woman, and he an ass to suffer her to write what she writes to him and of him."

But by far the best description of the Duchess comes from the pen of Mrs. Evelyn in a letter to Dr. Bohun, in 1667. She was not in the least taken in.

"Sir,—

I am concerned you should be absent when you might confirm the suffrages of your fellow-collegists; and see the mistress both universities court; a person who has not her equal possibly in the world, so extraordinary a woman she is in all things. I acknowledge, though I remember her some years since, and have not been a stranger to her fame, I was surprised to find so much extravagancy and vanity in any person not confined within four walls. Her habit particular, fantastical, not unbecoming a good shape, which she may truly boast of. Her face discovers the facility of the sex, in being persuaded it deserves the esteem years forbid, by the infinite care she takes to place her curls and patches. Her mien surpasses the imagination of poets, or the description of a romance heroine's greatness; her gracious bows, seasonable nods, courteous stretching out of her hands, twinkling of her eyes, and various

gestures of approbation, show what may be expected from her discourse, which is airy, empty, whimsical, and rambling as her books, aiming at science, difficulties, high notions, terminating commonly in nonsense, oaths and obscenity. Her way of address to people more than necessarily submissive; a certain general form to all, obliging by repeating affected, generous, kind expressions; endeavouring to show humility by calling things back still to improve her present greatness and favour to her friends.

I found Dr. Charles with her, complimenting her wit and learning in a high manner; which she took to be so much her due, that she swore if the schools did not banish Aristotle, and read Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, they did her wrong, and deserved to be utterly abolished. My part was not yet to speak, but admire; especially hearing her go on magnifying her own generous actions, stately buildings, noble fortunes, her lord's prodigious losses in the war, his power, valour, wit, learning and industry—what did she not mention to his or her own advantage? Sometimes, to give her breath, came in a fresh admirer; then she took occasion to justify her faith, to give an account of her religion, as new and unintelligible as her philosophy, to cite her own pieces, line and page in such a book, and to tell the adventures of some of her nymphs. At last I grew weary, and concluded that the creature called a chimera, which I had heard speak of, was now to be seen, and that it was time to retire for fear of infection; yet I hope, as she is an original, she may never have a copy. Never did I see a woman so full of herself, so amazingly vain and ambitious. What contrary miracles does this age produce. This lady and Mrs. Philips! The one transported with the

shadow of reason, the other possessed of the substance and insensible of her treasure; and yet men who are esteemed wise and learned, not only put them in even balance, but suffer the greatness of the one to weigh down the certain real worth of the other. This is all I can requite your rare verses with; which as much surpass the merit of the person you endeavour to represent, as I can assure you this description falls short of the lady I would make you acquainted with; but she is not of mortal race, and, therefore, cannot be defined.

M. E."

The perusal of the Duchess's writings is not profitable. They are not quite bad enough to be funny; their pretentiousness is simply tiresome, and their egotism unrelieved. In the book, "A true relation of my birth, breeding and life," she describes herself.

Two short passages may be quoted:

"As for my disposition it is more inclining to be melancholy but soft melting solitary and contemplating melancholy . . . I am very ambitious yet 'tis neither for Beauty, Wit, Titles, Wealth or Power but as they are steps to raise me to Fame's Tower which is to live by remembrance in after ages.

Only walking a slow pace in my chamber whilst my thoughts run apace in my brain so that the notions in my mind hinders the active exercise of my body: For should I Dance or Run or Walk apace, I should dance my thoughts out of measure, Run my Fancies out of Breath and Tread out the Feet of my Numbers."

This is not so bad and careful culling might produce passages which are not entirely absurd. Everyone is grateful in society for a note of extravagance and eccentricity.

But John Evelyn disagreed with his wife and with Pepys, and we are not prepared to say that good-natured and tolerant commendation would have been entirely out of place in writing to a friend. But what are we to say at phrases such as these in Evelyn's letter: He declares he will not "write a panegyric of your virtues which all the world admires, lest the indignity of my style should profane a thing so sacred." He then says that he never calls "her person to mind but to rank it among the Heroines and constellate with the graces," and he proceeds to compare her with a long list of women, starting with Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, including the mother of the Gracchi, Isabella of Castile, Lucretia d'Este, Vittoria Colonna, St. Bridget, St. Catharine of Siena and St. Theresa, and ending up with Queen Elizabeth and other queens. "But," he adds, "all these, I say, seem'd together, possess but that divided which your Grace retains in one." "What," he exclaims, "of sublime and worthy in the nature of things does not your Grace comprehend and explain!" and much more in the same strain.

We should like to think that Evelyn was a humourist laying it on thick while he was laughing up his sleeve. But Evelyn was not a humourist. Charles Lamb was.

With the recollection of this letter in the back of

one's mind, doubt might well arise in any consideration of Evelyn's longest and most important panegyric, amounting to a biography which he composed as a tribute to the memory of the maid of honour, Margaret Blagge, afterwards Mrs. Godolphin. But again here we may turn to Mrs. Evelyn for guidance, and this time we find an endorsement of her husband's good opinion, or rather her persuasion of her husband to an admiration for which he was at first very much disinclined.

*The Life of Mrs. Godolphin* has narrative as well as eulogy in it and, indeed, amounts to a seventeenth-century biography. But we must remember in criticising it that the author left it among the manuscripts described as "Things I would write out fair and reform if I had the leisure."

Nevertheless it is very carefully and neatly written out in the form of an Epistle to Lady Silvius. This lady was Anne Howard, whose sister was a maid of honour to the Queen with Margaret Blagge. She married Sir Gabriel Silvius, Hoffmaester to the Prince of Orange. Evelyn was specially fond of the letter form in writing. It relieved him of the restrictions which a more formal framework would impose on him.

There is beauty in his *Song of Praise*, but since a panegyric must be more or less indiscriminating, it often becomes difficult to decide what real amount of credit is due to the subject of the eulogy. People who never censure, blame or criticise receive a reputation for good nature. But they deprive themselves of

being able to pay a real compliment to a deserving subject. This so-called good nature destroys their judgment and their opinions become worthless. A single word of praise from a captious critic is worth a mound of superlatives from the habitual eulogist.

There is, however, a note of true sincerity in Evelyn's admiration for Margaret and a certain beauty in the story as he tells it. Moreover, we are forced to admit that, in his insistence on her moral perfection, he is enlarging with enthusiasm on the very qualities which he himself most admired. He is not praising her to her face; he is recording for the sake of posterity, as he did in the case of his own son, a singular instance of excellence maintaining its purity and brilliance for an all-too-short period of existence and in the most unsympathetic surroundings.

It was Mary Evelyn who first discovered Margaret Blagge and invited her as a guest to Sayes Court. She had been maid of honour to the Duchess of York, and held the same position with Queen Catharine of Braganza. In spite of her beauty, brilliance, wit and accomplishments, she was ill-suited to Court life owing to her extreme piety. John Evelyn for some time refused to believe that a saint could be found in the Court of Charles II, and it was only on his emergence from the private life of a country gentleman that circumstances brought him in contact with her, and he found she was not "that pert Lady" he had fancied. He disapproved of the Court and refused "to believe there were many saints in that country."

In a passage which gives us a good insight into his own disposition, Evelyn writes:

"I minded my Books and my Garden, and the circle was big enough for me. I aspired to no offers, no titles, no favours at Court, and really was hardly known to those next neighbours of mine, whom I had lived almost twenty years by: but the Country where this Lady lived I had much aversion to, for the reasons you may guess."

Circumstances brought them together and personal knowledge of her made him change his opinion.

"This lady keeping her chamber caused me one day to dine with her, which I took kindly, because 'twas without affectation and with no danger of surfeiting. But her conversation was a treat."

What struck him chiefly in this girl of eighteen, who was thirty-two years younger than himself, was that such disciplined piety could exist in so unfavourable an atmosphere. He describes how she

"passed thro' all those turbulent waters without so much as the least stain or tincture in her crystal, with her Piety grew up her Wit which was so sparkling, accompanied with a Judgment and Eloquence so extraordinary, a Beauty and Air so charming and lovely, in a word, an address so universally taking that, after a few years, the Court never saw or had seen such a Constellation of perfections amongst all their splendid circles."

The symbol of inviolate friendship between them was written out and signed with some solemnity.

Evelyn calls this "The marriage of Souls," and he tells her:

"The privileges I claim are that I may visit you without being thought importunate; that I may now and then write to you to cultivate my Style; discourse with you to improve my understanding; read to you to receive your Reflections; and that you freely command me upon all occasions without any reserve whatsoever; you are to write to me when I am absent; mention me in all your prayers to God, to admonish me of all my fastings, to visit me in sickness, to take care of me when I am in distress and never to forsake me, change or lessen your particular esteem, till I prove unconstant or perfidious and no man's friend."

She, on her side, in a letter is equally full and explicit, declaring him to be "Her first friend that ever I had and ever shall you be so." His visits were frequent and his admiration grew.

There are striking passages in his narrative, but unfortunately this forms a small proportion of his little book, which is mostly filled with his repeated and ecstatic expressions of admiration. When he visited her she was generally in her oratory, but he notes that her piety was not only contemplative but found expression in many acts of kindness and charity. Evelyn looked after her pecuniary affairs and was always at her side as a counsellor and friend. She was ever disciplining herself, and correcting

herself with resolutions and with the aid of texts and injunctions, which she hung upon the walls of her room. One of her resolutions was "Not to talk foolishly to men, *more especially* THE KING."

With all this she had great social gifts. As an actress she was incomparable, was greatly in request and brilliant in company, although one of her rules was "If you speak anything they like say 'tis borrowed and be humble when commended." In fact, fortified by the spirit of an ascetic, she managed to keep her head.

Evelyn, who knew well enough the atmosphere she lived in, could not but admire such achievement. At last she confided in him her love for Sidney Godolphin, who also held a Court appointment. Evelyn had been opposed to her "melancholy resolution of absolutely renouncing the thought of marriage." Court life, however, became unendurable to her and she decided to retire and live with Lady Berkeley, of Stratton, at Berkeley House. "Their Majesties were both unwilling to part with such a jewel," but after a while consented. In one of his inimitable phrases, Evelyn describes her departure from Whitehall. "I leave you, Madam, to imagine how the rest of the court mourned this recess, and how dim the tapers burnt as she pass'd the ante-chamber . . . and verily I had not observed so universal a damp upon the spirits of everyone who knew her."

He describes how Margaret's eyes "sparkled with joy" as she entered Berkeley House, and exclaims,

"had you seen in what a trice after she was led up into her apartment she had put all her equipage in order, ranged her library and disposed of her compendious inventory, you would have said there was nothing prettier than that busy moment" . . . "She deserts her glittering balls and goes no more to the theatre, that she may sing in the choir of Seraphims and contemplate the celestial vision."

She confides in letters to Evelyn how she is torn between her "love of the Holy Jesus," to which love she wishes to devote her life, and her love of Godolphin. He gives her sensible advice: "as to the opportunities of serving God, an active life was preferable to the contemplative; and that I should not doubt to see as many crown'd in heaven who had been married, as of virgins." He argued at great length and with many biblical and classical illustrations. She seemed unconvinced and continued a life of rigid religious discipline. She had projects for retiring to some house of her own. But this came to nothing, and she spent the summer at Lady Berkeley's house at Twickenham.

A command came from the King and Queen that she was to take part in a play in which "none were to be actors but persons of the most illustrious quality." She could not refuse, and was given the part of Diana in a pastoral play in which the Princesses Mary and Anne, with other "shining beauties" of the Court, appeared. With the greatest misgiving did she return to the Court atmosphere. Reciting her lines to perfection, gorgeously dressed and adorned with

twenty thousand pounds' worth of jewels, she spent even the odd moments when she was off the stage in a corner of the "tiring room" ("where several ladies, her companions, were railing with the gallants,") in silence, reading a book of devotion. After the entertainment is over "away she slips like a Spirit to Berkeley House and to her oratory."

Margaret Blagge married Sidney Godolphin (afterwards Earl of Godolphin) secretly, and for some unaccountable reason she never even told Evelyn, who had been very close to her, acting as a sort of father confessor. He admits this occasioned "a friendly quarrel" between them. But she went further and suggested in a letter that she might not marry. "This," comments Evelyn, "was the only time that in her life she ever prevaricated with me." He cannot help saying, "I took it a little to heart she should so industriously conceal a thing from one to whom she had all along communicated her most intimate thoughts." The reason for the secrecy was never clear. Perhaps her husband imposed a promise of silence on her. Nevertheless her treatment of Evelyn was not to her credit. When they met later she was very repentant, and of course Evelyn would not allow their friendship to be injured, and he took infinite pains in superintending the building of a house for the young couple in Scotland Yard.

Margaret accompanied the Berkeleys to Paris, Lord Berkeley having been appointed Ambassador. She was "overwhelmed with grief" when she took solemn leave of Evelyn on the beach. He cannot

understand why she should leave her husband. John Evelyn, the younger, was one of the party. In Paris she behaved as she had in London, shunning society as far as she could, refusing to meet the King, and occupying herself with her devotions in the intervals of cards and conversation, or "prate," as she called it, which distracted her for several hours every day. She studied arithmetic with young John Evelyn, who, in a letter to the grandfather, Sir Richard Browne, describes her as "my pretty, pious, pearly governess."

On her return from Paris, Evelyn was again at her side, managing her finances, arranging for her lodging and inviting her to Sayes Court. All through the book he quotes verbatim from her letters so as to illustrate the degree her piety reached. He is amazed at her unconcern for all earthly joys, and also when, as the time approached for the birth of her child, she seems by her preparations to have a presentiment of her own death. Her disregard of worldly happiness, he explains, "did not proceed from any peevish discontent or singularity of humour but from a philosophical, wise and pious consideration of the vicissitude and instability of all earthly fruitions."

After the child was born she seemed at first to be none the worse, but she was seized suddenly with a fever and died. Evelyn's sorrow at her loss may be imagined. He refers to it in several entries in his diary showing the depth of his grief.

After relating the story of Margaret's life, which occupies about three-quarters of the book, and after

enumerating the instructions and bequests in her will and other papers, he proposes in the last quarter to describe her character, dwelling continually on his inability to do it adequately. "I have written her Life and should now present your Ladyship with her Picture: here are the Colours, but where is (as I said) the Master?" Then follows a more detailed account of how Margaret spent her days from the early morning when, lest she should over-sleep or her maid be late, she had a string tied round her wrist and passed through the keyhole on to the terrace for the sentry to pull. Her disciplined routine amounted at times to such excessive austerities and fasting that Evelyn is obliged to reason with her and point out that she may endanger her health. Her religious transports he regards as exceptional and remarkable: "I do not call them Rapt and Illapses because she would not have endured to be esteemed above other humble Christians; but that she was sometimes visited with extraordinary favours I have many reasons to believe." Yet all through he refers constantly to her wit and conversational powers, and never describes her as dejected or morose. "She made virtue a cheerful thing lovely as herself." There is really no character sketch at all because the note of ecstatic eulogy is kept up till the end. In his "picture" there is an absence of shadow or relief; it is all indiscriminate radiance, and no high lights therefore stand out with any prominence.

The notes in the Diary on the subject of his friendship with Margaret Godolphin are brief,

because he knew in his revisions that he was devoting a special book to this episode in his life. There is, however, an exception in the entry recording her death in which he laments the loss of her friendship with great emotion. "Her husband," he writes, "struck with unspeakable affliction fell down as dead. The King himself and all the Court expressed their sorrow." Evelyn was entrusted with carrying out all the funeral arrangements according to Margaret's wishes. Her body was carried to Godolphin in Cornwall in a hearse with six horses. "The corpse was ordered to be taken out of the hearse every night and decently placed in the house with tapers about it." The funeral cost "not much less than £1,000." He could only accompany the procession as far as Hounslow. A brass plate was soldered on the lead of the coffin with the following inscription:

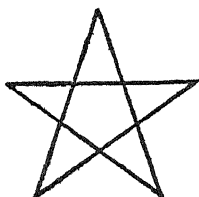
Here lyes a pearle none such the ocean yields  
 In all the Treasures of his liquid fields;  
 Butt such as that wise Merchant sought  
 Who the bright Gerum with all his substance bought  
 Such to Jerusalem above translates  
 Our God, t'adorne the Embrace of her Gates  
 The Spouse with such Embroderie does come  
 To meete her Nuptialls the Celestiall Groome.

In the Diary entry Evelyn writes: "We often prayed, visited the sick and miserable, received, read, discoursed, and communicated in all holy offices together."

JOHN EVELYN

Among his papers was found a Book of Prayers\* composed by him and presented to Mrs. Godolphin. It is entitled *Officium Sanctæ & Individuæ Trinitatis*; "or Privat Devotions and Offices, composed and collected by John Evelyn for his Annuall and Quotidian Use, with Calendar Table, etc." The manuscript is very beautifully written out by Samuel Hoar. The 12mo book is bound in old crimson morocco, with crest and monogram on the back. The manuscript is autographed by him with the device of the pentacle and motto, which he also used in the Life:

Un Dieu



un Amy

On the fly-leaf is written: "Remember with what importunity you desired this book of your friend, Remember me for it in your Prayers." Throughout the book there are curious emendations written in by Mrs. Godolphin, and some brief records of dates inserted by J. E. and Mrs. G.

Evelyn idolised Margaret. She was to him the embodiment of the virtues, combining piety with personal charm, which is uncommon enough to attract attention. There is no suggestion whatever

\*Wheatley records that this book was sold in 1873 for £36 10s. od. Austin Dobson (1906) states in a note that he saw it in the Library at Wotton.

that he was in love with her. It was the most exalted and purest friendship. "She was most dear to my wife and affectionate to my children," he writes. The close friendship between Evelyn and Godolphin continued after her death.

Margaret Godolphin was by no means a unique type. Religious zeal and disciplined piety may be found in quite as pronounced a degree in two other ladies of that period: Mary Countess of Warwick and Elizabeth Viscountess Mordaunt. The latter kept a diary consisting of prayers only. But the existence of such blameless virtue in the very centre of the Restoration Court was what appealed to Evelyn as a phenomenon which called for the full use of his rich store of superlatives. His Memoir of Margaret Godolphin remained in manuscript until it was published by Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, in 1847, and five editions have appeared since. A less rapturous but more practical document may be quoted as a footnote to Margaret Godolphin's story\*. It is the directions for housekeeping sent to Margaret Blagge, on her marriage to Sidney Godolphin, by Evelyn from his wife's dictation. Mary Evelyn goes into great detail, from which the following extracts may be given:—

"Dear Child of the £500 per annum (which you tell me is what you would contract your expenses to) and that you are to provide your husband's clothes, stable, and other house expenses (except his pocket money) I leave you £20 over, and for your own

\*H. B. Wheatley. *Pepysiana*, p. 95.

pocket £40 and that little enough, considering sickness, physicians and innumerable accidents that are to be provided against with any certainty. But (as the proverb you know is) I am to cut the cloak according to the cloth and I have done it as nearly as possible."

There follows a tabulated list of various necessary articles and then a long list of estimates, of which two can be given.

"For a family of eight persons (as many as were in the Ark) this I think to be a decent provision, conjecturally computed as to the prices little more or less as within the compass you give me."

*Living in London*

	£	s.	d.
Housekeeping	244	4	0
Your own clothing (you being already plentifully stocked)	66	0	0
Your husband's clothes	40	0	0
Your women's wages	10	0	0
Your two maids	8	0	0
Valet de chambre	10	0	0
Footman and groom	20	0	0
Coach and chair hires	26	0	0
Charity and pocket money for gratuity	40	0	0
Your husband's two horses	30	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£494	4	0

# PANEGYRICS

## *Bill of Fare for Sunday*

	£	s.	d.
Pottage of a knuckle of Veal, piece of neck of mutton, a little Bone of Beef, a little pork or	0	3	0
Bacon and some herbs, Roast Beef (if you please) 3½ stone or fillet of Veal	0	5	0
Rabbits or what you please	0	1	0
Artichokes, peas, asparagus as the season is	0	1	0
	<hr/>		
Total	£0	10	0*

\*The amounts must be multiplied by four or five to arrive at the present value of the money.

## CHAPTER X

### GARDENS AND TREES

EVELYN was a great gardener and a great forester. Gardens and trees were the strongest interest of his life, his fondest pursuit and the subjects about which he attained greatest knowledge as much by experience as by study. His writings on the science of horticulture or arboriculture are far more authoritative than the papers he produced on other subjects. It will be necessary to deal with his written work and also with his practical work, as well as with the criticism and opinion of the gardens he visited.

There were beautiful gardens and many writers on flowers and gardening long before Evelyn's day. In the previous century alone, in addition to Bacon's Essay on gardening, there were special books, such as: *On Husbandrie*, by Thomas Tusser (1557), *The Profitable Art of Gardening*, by Thomas Hill (1568), both of which went into several editions, and with them a number of books of Herbals, of which the best known are Gerrard's (1597), and Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole* (also his *Paradisus terrestris, or a garden of all sorts of pleasant flowers*), with their beautiful wood-cuts. In the early seventeenth century Gervase Markham published *The English Husbandman*, and William Lawson *A New Orchard*

*and Garden*; and during Evelyn's lifetime *Flora Ceres and Pomona* was written by John Rea, whom Evelyn often quotes, and *The English Gardener*, by Leonard Meager. At the time of the Restoration there was a notable revival of interest in gardening, and the owners of great country houses were busy laying out or improving their grounds.

John Evelyn did perhaps more than anyone else to encourage and popularise gardening by practical experiment, by voluminous study, by personal inspection and to some extent by initiative and invention. He collected on the subject the most valuable and extensive material which hitherto had been, and perhaps ever since has been, accumulated by one single individual. One may regret that what he refers to as his other "impertinences," in themselves so extensive, interfered with the production of the gardening book he planned to write, which undoubtedly would have been a great book, for his knowledge of this beloved art, science and occupation far exceeded the information he had amassed on a hundred and one other subjects, though this was by no means negligible.

The small garden has now been enriched by modern knowledge and modern facilities. The delights of the garden have sweetened the lives of multitudes. Flowers, unknown to our ancestors, and wonderful varieties of plants and shrubs are now within the reach of people of small means. The charm of nature, sometimes puzzling, but always repaying those who love pleasant toil, has been brought into

intimate contact with the many who in days gone by were only occasionally privileged to stand and stare. Yet the great gardens and the great gardeners for the most part only exist for us as matters of history. The grand scale of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is now beyond the range of the individual, the small, even the niggly, has taken the place of the spacious. But in the gorgeous magnificence of grandiose perspectives and the dazzling splendours of the past, a model and example may surely be found for the public bodies who now have control of parks, gardens and open spaces. With few exceptions their efforts so far would make the gardeners of the past wonder why their great efforts of design and imagination had borne so little fruit, and why London with its vast proportions can show nothing in scale or in grandeur worthy of its importance.

The works from Evelyn's pen on horticulture and arboriculture began with a translation of a French book in 1658, and continued at intervals during the remainder of his life. With the exception of *Sylva* they are for the most part occasional papers or translations. He had in view "a grand Hortulan design" which he proposed to call *Elysium Britannicum*, and many of these papers were just chapters for the great work, which, however, he did no more than plan. Among his papers the headings of the chapters of his proposed work were found. It was to consist of three books and forty-three chapters, the first book dealing with the soil of the garden and the

seasons, the second with garden design, and the third with planting, distilling and with descriptions of gardens. An extract from a letter from Evelyn to Dr. John Beale, F.R.S., Chaplain to the King (11th July, 1679), must be quoted because it shows as well as any document how Evelyn's time was filled and how he was really handicapped by having too many irons in the fire:

"When again I consider into what an ocean I am plunged, how much I have written and collected for above these twenty years upon this fruitful and inexhaustible subject (I mean horticulture), not yet fully digested to my mind, and what insuperable pains it will require to insert the (daily increasing) particulars into what I have already in some measure prepared, and which must of necessity be done by my own hand, I am almost out of hope that I shall ever have strength and leisure to bring it to maturity, having for the last ten years of my life been in perpetual motion, and hardly two months in the year at my own habitation, or conversant with my family. You know what my charge and care has been during the late unhappy war with the Hollanders; and what it has cost me as to avocations, and for the procuring money, and attending the Lord Treasurer, etc., to discharge the quarters of many thousands. Since that, I have upon me no fewer than three executorships, besides other domestic concerns, either of them enough to distract a more steady and composed genius than is mine. Superadd to these the public confusions in church and kingdom (never to be sufficiently deplored), and which cannot but most sensibly touch every sober and honest man. In the

midst of these disturbances, who but Dr. Beale (that stands upon the tower, looks down unconcernedly on all those tempests) can think of gardens and fish-ponds, and the *délîces* and ornaments of peace and tranquillity!"

A list of his surviving works on the subject may be given, with their short titles—(the immense titles given to publications in those days occupy several lines): *The French Gardener* (translation), 1658; *Sylva*, 1664 (to the later editions of which were added *Terra* (1676) and *Pomona*); *Kalendarium Hortense*, 1664; *The Compleat Gardener* (translation), 1693; *Acetaria*, 1699.

Taking the shorter works in their order, *The French Gardener* was a translation of "An accomplished Piece, first written by R. D. C. D. W. B. D. N. and now transplanted into English by Philocepos." It was dedicated to his friend Thomas Henshaw, and in the epistle dedicatory he shows his desire to introduce more garden ornaments into England: "In order to this, my purpose was to introduce the least known (though not the least delicious) appendices to gardens; and such are not the names only, but the descriptions, plots, materials, and ways of contriving the ground for parterres, grottos, fountains; the proportions of walks, perspectives, rocks, aviaries, vivaries, apiaries, pots, conservatories, piscinas, groves, cryptas, cabinets, echos, statues and other ornaments of a *vigna*, etc., without which the best garden is without life and very defective."

During his travels as a young man in France in 1644, he visited many French gardens and noted in

his diary with enthusiasm many contrivances of this description. At Cardinal Richelieu's villa at Ruell he even goes to the extent of admiring a sham arch:

"the Arch of Constantine painted on a wall in oil, as large as the real one at Rome, so well done, that even a man skilled in painting may mistake it for stone and sculpture. The sky and hills which seem to be between the arches, are so natural that swallows and other birds thinking to fly through have dashed themselves against the wall. I was infinitely taken with this agreeable cheat."

During those travels the gardens to which he devotes the longest description and which delight him most are those of the Luxembourg Palace, where the statues, terraces, pools, groves and grottos fill him with enthusiasm. In this entry he gives a very pleasant picture not only of the garden but of those who frequent it.

"In sum nothing is wanted to render this palace and gardens perfectly beautiful and magnificent; nor is it one of the least diversions to see the number of persons of quality citizens and strangers, who frequent it and to whom all access is freely permitted so that you may see some walks and retirements full of gallants and ladies; in others melancholic friars; in others studious scholars; in others jolly citizens, some sitting or lying on the grass, others running and jumping; some playing at bowls and balls, others dancing and singing; and all this without the least disturbance, by reason of the largeness of the place."

A second edition of *The French Gardener* was issued in 1669 only with a view to "weeding it and purging it of some typographical escapes." At the end of this edition he adds, "The English Vineyard vindicated by John Rose." Rose was eventually gardener to the King, and Evelyn in a preface explains his reasons for publishing this paper.

"Being one day refreshing myself in the gardens of Essex house and among other things falling into discourse with Mr. Rose (the gardener to Her Grace the Duchess of Somerset) about vines and particularly the cause of the neglect of vineyards of late in England, he reasoned so pertinently upon that subject (as indeed he does upon all things which concern this hortulan profession) that, conceiving how greatly it might oblige many worthy and ingenious persons, lovers of plantations and of the noblest parts of it, I was easily persuaded to gratify the modest and charitable inclinations, to have them communicated to the world."

He especially commends Rose's observations as "native productions of his own experience, without obtruding anything upon the reputation of others, which is now become the most pernicious imposture that flatters us into so many mistakes and errors; whilst men follow such directions as they meet withal in print, or from some *Monsieurs* new come over who think we are as much obliged to follow their mode of gardening as we do that of their garments, till we become in both ridiculous."

It was all very well Evelyn being so down on

learning from the "*Monsieurs*," but he himself was responsible for translating two French books on gardening, and his admiration for their gardens was unbounded. He was quite right in affirming the superiority of practical experience over book knowledge. But the whole episode here discovered is charmingly characteristic. Evelyn, sitting and basking in the lovely garden which sloped down to the riverside (now Essex Street, Essex Court, etc.), calls Rose, who is at work there, to him. He encourages Rose to discourse on his favourite theme. Evelyn is delighted, and tells him the best way to publish his views is to have them added to his own book. There was kindness as well as enthusiasm in that sunny garden scene; and sunny those days must have been, for these two to press the need for growing grapes on English soil. So he went home and becoming excited as he wrote, he was unable to prevent himself going off into irrelevancies about French clothes.

In 1693 he translated another French work on gardening by M. de La Quintinye, "Chief Director of all the gardens of the French King" (who visited England), in six books. In the "Advertisement" to this book, fearing, no doubt, that he might be thought to be praising up French gardens and gardeners as against English, he pays a very great and well-deserved tribute to the two great English gardeners of the day, George London and Henry Wise, whose famous garden at Brompton Park, near Kensington, he had visited in the company of Edmund Waller, whom he describes as "an extra-

ordinary young gentleman of great accomplishments, an excellent botanist, a rare engraver on brass, writer in Latin and a poet."

There was a succession of eminent English gardeners at the time of the Restoration who derived their inspiration and knowledge from the most famous of French gardeners, André Le Nôtre. John Rose, who studied under Le Nôtre at Versailles, became royal gardener to Charles II at St. James's. He was succeeded by his pupil, George London, who reached a very high position and was appointed a Page of the Backstairs to Queen Mary. Switzer at a later date says in his *Gardener's Recreation* that London might have been called director-general of the gardens of England, most of which he visited once or twice each year, riding generally fifty or sixty miles a day. With his partner, Henry Wise, he established the Brompton Park Garden, which Evelyn describes in this advertisement, and the two were responsible for designing gardens all over the kingdom.

The translation in verse, *Rapinus Hortorum*, originally written in Latin, is a work of no special merit, which has been wrongly ascribed in many books\* to the author of *Sylva*, although he explains in his diary (January 3rd, 1672-3) that it was the work of his son John, who was then eighteen years old. The father thought well enough of the poem to have it printed at the end of his *Sylva*.

\**Miscellaneous Writings*. William Upcott, pp. 623-4, copied by other authorities.

*Kalendarium Hortense:* or Gardener's Almanack, was published in 1664, and proved one of the most popular of Evelyn's writings. It was dedicated to his friend, the poet Abraham Cowley, and it went into ten editions in the author's life-time. The striking passage in the opening of the Introduction epitomises Evelyn's idealistic attitude towards gardening.

"As Paradise (though of God's own planting) was no longer Paradise, than the man put into it continued to dress it and to keep it, so, nor will our gardens (as near as we can contrive them to the resemblance of that blessed abode) remain long in this perfection, unless they are also continuously cultivated. For when we have so much celebrated the life and felicity of an excellent gardener, as to think it preferable to all other diversions whatsoever; it is not because of the leisure which he enjoys above other men; ease and opportunity which ministers to vain and insignificant delights; such as fools derive from sensual objects; we dare boldly pronounce it there is not amongst men a more laborious life than is that of a good gardener; but because a labour full of tranquillity and satisfaction, natural and instructive, and such as (if any) contributes to piety and contemplation, experience, health and longevity, *munera nondum intellecta Deum:* in sum, a condition it is furnished with the most innocent, laudable, and purest of earthly felicities, and such as does certainly make the nearest approaches to that blessed state, where only they enjoy all things without pains; so as those who were led only by the light of nature, because they could fancy none more glorious, thought it worthy of entertaining the souls of their departed heroes and most illustrious of mortals."

In stating his object in writing the book he says: "And it is from the result of very much experience and an extraordinary inclination to cherish so innocent and laudable a diversion and to incite an affection in the Nobles of this nation towards it, that I begin to open to them so many of the interior secrets, and most precious rules of this mysterious art, without imposture or invidious reserve."

The scheme of the book is eminently practical. He takes each month in sequence and gives directions under four headings: "To be done in the orchard and olitory garden," "Fruits in prime or yet lasting," "To be done in parterre and flower garden," and "Flowers in prime or yet lasting." At the end there are instructions about a greenhouse furnace with diagrams, and a letter of gratitude from Sir Dudley Cullum, a notable gardener who had adopted this device of Evelyn's.

We, in the twentieth century, may have greater scientific knowledge of horticulture than Evelyn had, but the admirable advice set out in these pages can be taken as the foundation for all the subsequent developments in the art. In flowers, and more especially in fruit, there must be many names given in Evelyn's list which no longer exist. His list of pears, for instance, is more than twice as long as his list of apples, and few of them are known to-day; and he has a long list of peaches and nectarines. But it would require an expert to gauge precisely what we have lost and what we have gained. The popularity of this treatise can well be understood.

## GARDENS AND TREES

As in *Sylva*, his practical knowledge is so full that there is no need for any of the digressions and quotations of authorities with which so much that he wrote is loaded. *Terra* he describes as a Philosophical Essay of Earth, and *Pomona* an appendix concerning fruit trees in relation to Cyder.

*Acetaria* (a discourse of sallets) he wrote when he was nearly eighty. He dedicated and presented the book to Chancellor Somers, who, he tells us, thanked him "in a letter of extraordinary civility." The dedicatory letter is in Evelyn's most elaborate style, full of pompous irrelevancies. He says he wants to get beyond the "fantasms and fruitless speculations which signify nothing to the specific nature of things, solid and useful knowledge." After a digression on Solomon's temple he pulls himself up: "and now, my Lord, I expect some will wonder what my meaning is, to usher in a trifle with so much magnificence and end at last in a fine receipt for the dressing of a sallet with an handful of pot herbs!" But he is off again speaking of emperors, kings, consuls and dictators who "sometimes changed their sceptres for the spade and their purple for the gardener's apron," and before he winds up he quotes Pliny, Cicero and Seneca.

The book itself is a learned and full disquisition, giving first of all a botanical and historical description of seventy-three "esculent plants and herbs," with some pages of further notes on others. Then follow instructions on the manner of dressing salads and the ingredients used. In view of the careless

and often disgusting methods of dressing salads still adopted in this country, where shreds of spotted lettuce leaves, black-edged from being cut with a steel knife, are drenched in sour vinegar with some lumps of beetroot, it would be well if Evelyn's nine admirable and charming instructions could be re-printed and distributed as a leaflet for cooks and housewives.

One is tempted to quote them in full, but some brief indication of their contents must suffice. "Let your herby ingredients be exquisitely culled," is the opening injunction and cleaned of all "worm-eaten, slimy, cankered, dry, spotted or anyways vitiated leaves." After they have been "discreetly sprinkled" with spring water, "swing them altogether in a clean coarse napkin." About the oil he is very particular; it must not be "high coloured nor yellow but with an eye rather of a pallid olive green, without smell or the least touch of rancid." After a short paragraph insisting on sweet wine vinegar he gives a long disquisition on salt. Mustard he refers to as a "noble ingredient," and he recommends "the best Tewkesbury or else composed of the soundest and weightiest Yorkshire seed." There is a word about pepper; but of the saffron so much used in Germany he says: "we little encourage its admittance into our sallet." Eggs are mashed in with the rest, and there is a stern injunction not to use a steel knife. Lastly, the salad dish must not be of metal, but "of porcelain or of the Holland delft-ware," and the stirring is to continue "till all the furniture be equally moistened." Lists,

further instructions and historical illustrations conclude the paper. There was a reprint of *Acetaria* in 1706, but since then no other edition has been printed.

Evelyn's visits to and descriptions of gardens occupy a number of entries in his Diary and are also introduced in his books. In fact he was more inclined to judge, praise and criticise men for their houses and gardens than for their morals and their politics.

So far as human beings were concerned he does not often describe them with any detail, and only occasionally does he criticise them. Not that he was not interested in them, for he was very sociable. But like many other absorbed and industrious students and specialists, his critical faculty was not highly developed in his estimates of human nature. But in Nature it was different; a badly laid-out garden or a neglected tree on the one hand, or fine cultivation, beautiful perspectives and well-grown plants on the other, would lead him to appraise with great detail the subtleties, the beauties, the successes or the failures which he noted and write (and talk no doubt) at length about them. References to his own garden and his early planting of trees occur throughout the Diary. But there are two documents which bear especially on the Sayes Court garden, and give us some idea of its richness and profusion. The first is his letter to the Royal Society (April 14th, 1684), the second his directions to his own gardener.

In his letter to the Royal Society he sets out to

describe "the havoc which a rude season has made in my poor gardens . . . the past winter has been so severe in my territories . . . it has ravaged all that lay open and were abroad without any mercy." This was the famous frost of 1683-4, when the Thames was frozen over, and (as seen in an old engraving) there were booths set up in streets on the ice. Evelyn describes it in his diary; "coaches plied from Westminster to the Temple and from several other stairs to and fro as in the streets, sleds, sliding with skates, a bull-baiting, horse and coach races, puppet plays and interludes, cooks, tippling and other lewd places, so that it seemed to be a bacchanalian triumph or carnival on the water."

Only some of the details in the letter with regard to a few of his trees can be mentioned. The elms were not touched, but the cork trees were past recovery. The horse chestnut had not suffered; it was "turgid with buds and ready to explain itself." The cedars were lost, but not the ilex, the rosemary entirely lost, "to my great sorrow because I not only had beautiful hedges of it but sufficient to afford me flowers for the making a considerable quantity of the Queen of Hungary's celebrated water." The hedge of *Halimus* or sea "purseslan" also perished. The laurustinus looked "suspiciously." Shrubs in the shade suffered less than those in the sun. He accounts for this by explaining "the reciprocations of being somewhat relaxed every day and then made rigid and stiff again all night, which bending and unbending so often, opening and closing the parts does exceedingly

mortify them." In other words the sun does the damage. (This may be noticed even in stone which is far better preserved on the north than on the south side of a building.) The *phillyreas augusti* and *serratifolios* had "hardly been sensible of the least impression." He gives advice about the choice and tender shrubs, and warns gardeners not to be taken in by an early warm day or two to set them out too soon. He recommends watching "till we find the wise mulberry put forth certainly the most faithful monitor." His holly hedge was "mortified near a foot beneath the top but only on the south side." The wall fruit had not suffered except the figs, but the "sampier" was "all rotted to the very root." In the last paragraph, he writes:

"My tortoise, which, by his constant burying himself in the earth at the approach of winter, I look upon as a kind of *plant-animal*, happening to be obstructed by a vine root from mining to the depth he was usually wont to interr, is found stark dead, after having many years escaped the severest winters."

He ends by a note on fish, of which he had lost very few, and nightingales, which were "as brisk and frolic as ever." *The Directions for the Gardiner at Says-Court But which may be of Use for Other gardens*,\* he compiled at various times and never intended for publication. It is a strictly practical manual for any gardener, but it shows at the same time how richly planted the Sayes Court garden was. His

\*Published in 1932. Nonsuch Press, edited by Geoffrey Keynes.

gardener's name is given on the first page. "Jonathan Mosse came to me apprentice for six years. 24th June 1686." Of fruit trees there is a considerable list, many of the names of which are strange to us now. The various divisions of the garden show that he had a kitchen garden, fountain garden, greenhouse garden, bowling green, orchards, physic garden, coronary garden, shrubbery, orangery and nursery garden. We catch an occasional glimpse of parts of the garden; thus, for instance, in the west quarter of the bowling green there were: "Nine Damson trees. The cherries are Flanders. Vines at every pier of the wall. White muscadine at the corner pier next the door into the east quarter. Corinth and gooseberries between the trees in both quarters; strawberries in the borders. Violets about the half-circle." His instructions about *Gillyflowers* in the coronary garden end: "save and sow seeds of those flowers in February on the hot-bed, and plant them forth in Michaelmas: This is a precious secret." Under "Method" there are directions for the gardener for each day of the week and for each season of the year, from which it can be noted that "the weder" who assisted him was a woman. At the end there is a comprehensive list of "Instruments Necessary for a Gardiner." Hoes he calls "hawes," trowels "flower googes." He has three rollers, of iron, stone and wood. There was no motor mower to tear up weedy lawns, but three scythes differently hung to cut the grass (in which we may be sure there were neither daisies, dandelions nor plantains) "once

a fortnight with ease." He began with a heading "The Bee Calendar," but he did not carry this further. There is only a drawing of a "Castrating hooke, to use when one would cut out a portion of the combs." The simple and excellent directions contained in this little book are as true and as practical to-day as when they were written.

Many of the gardens mentioned by Evelyn in his Diary have now disappeared, but one garden of Evelyn's creation—or at any rate the best part of it—remains to-day and deserves a full description. Albury, in Surrey, now the property of the Duke of Northumberland, was in the seventeenth century in the possession of Henry Howard (afterwards sixth Duke of Norfolk). Evelyn knew the owner, and it was easy for him to visit Albury, as it lay not far from Wotton, the family seat where his brother George lived. He went to Albury, in 1642, and probably on other occasions. But in 1655 is the first mention of gardens: "I went to Alburie to visit Mr. Howard who had begun to build and alter the gardens much." He was there again hunting in 1662 and five years later he notes: "I accompanied Mr. Howard to his villa at Albury where I designed for him the plot for his canal and garden with a crypt through the hill." And three years later: "To Alburie to see how the garden proceeded which I found exactly done to the design and plot I had made with the crypt through the mountain in the park thirty perches in length. Such a pausillipe is nowhere in England besides. The canal now digging

and the vineyard planted" ("pausillipe" is a reference to the famous subterranean passage of Posilipo, near Naples). Terraces, crypta, canals, to which were added niches with busts and fountains, were highly characteristic of Evelyn's love of garden ornament, but all at Albury was conceived on a scale which showed how he could throw his imagination into the future, seeing trees and hedges as they would eventually appear, and so allowing for growth in planning his proportions.

That Evelyn was greatly attracted to Albury is shown by the fact that he was tempted to buy the property. In a letter to Edward Thurland, one of the trustees, he writes of his "singular inclination for Albury in case (as I am confident it will) that seat be exposed to sale I know you are potent and may do much herein . . . I suppose the place will invite many candidates but my money is good."\* The property, however, was bought by Mr. Finch, the King's solicitor and son of the late Lord Chancellor; and Evelyn, visiting the gardens once again in 1687, notes: "I found the garden which I first designed for the Duke of Norfolk nothing improved."

Descriptions of gardens, like paintings of gardens, are generally hopelessly inadequate. An indiscriminate use of superlatives has no power of producing atmosphere. In this case, however, we can borrow a description from a man as different from Evelyn as any man could be in every respect except in the love, which he fully shared with him, for nature and for

\**Diary and Correspondence*. W. Bray, vol. III, p. 63.

## GARDENS AND TREES

floral and sylvan beauty. On his rural rides in 1822 William Cobbett\* visited Mr. Drummond, then in possession of Albury, and we can well allow him to describe what he saw in the

“gardens which, without exception, are, to my fancy, the prettiest in England; that is to say, that I ever saw in England.

They say that these gardens were laid out for one of the Howards in the reign of Charles the Second, by Mr. Evelyn, who wrote the *Sylva*. . . . Between the house and the gardens there is a very beautiful run of water, with a sort of little wild narrow sedgy meadow. The gardens are separated from this by a hedge running along from east to west. From this hedge there go up to the hill, at right angles, several other hedges, which divide the land here into distinct gardens or orchards. Along at the top of these there goes a yew hedge, or, rather, a row of small yew trees, the trunks of which are bare for about eight or ten feet high, and the tops of which form one solid head of about ten feet high, while the bottom branches come out on each side of the row about eight feet horizontally. This hedge, or row, is *a quarter of a mile long*. There is nice hard sand-road under this species of umbrella; and summer and winter here is a most delightful walk! Behind this row of yews there is a space, or garden (a quarter of a mile long you will observe) about thirty or forty feet wide, as nearly as I can recollect. At the back of this garden, and facing the yew tree row is a wall probably ten feet high which forms the breastwork of a *terrace*: and it is this terrace which is the most beautiful thing that ever I saw in the gardening way. It is a quarter of a mile long and, I believe, between thirty

\* Cobbett's *Rural Rides*, Vol. I, p. 195.

and forty feet wide; of the finest green sward and as level as a die.

The wall, along at this back of the terrace, stands close against the hill, which you see with the trees and underwood upon it rising above the wall. So here is the finest spot of fruit trees that can possibly be imagined. At both ends of this garden the trees in the park are lofty and there are pretty many of them. The hills on the south side of the mansion house are covered with lofty trees, chiefly beech and chestnut; so that a warmer, a more sheltered, spot than this it seems to be impossible to imagine. Observe too, how judicious it was to plant the row of yew trees at the distance I have described from the wall which forms the breastwork of the terrace: that wall as well as the wall at the back of the terrace are covered with fruit trees, and the yew tree row is just high enough to defend the former from the winds without injuring it by its shade. In the middle of the wall at the back of the terrace there is a recess, about thirty feet in front and twelve feet deep, and here is a *basin* in to which rises a spring coming out of the hills. The overflowings of this basin go under the terrace and down across the garden into the rivulet below. . . . Take it altogether, this, certainly, is the prettiest garden that ever I beheld. There was taste and sound judgment at every step in the laying out of this place. Everywhere utility and convenience is combined with beauty. The terrace is by far the finest thing of the sort I ever saw, and the whole thing is altogether a great compliment to the taste of the times in which it was formed."

Although this was written over a hundred years ago the beautiful terraces still exist, and Evelyn's magnificent conception has given to that hillside a

beauty which has endured for nearly three hundred years, and has only been further enhanced by the passages of time.

Some of Evelyn's remarks about other gardens are worth recording, not only because he is at his best when he is noting the various features with his observing eye, but because they tell us of gardens which have since disappeared, or give earlier history of gardens which still remain.

"None-such," the famous Tudor palace, was still standing, although not long after it was pulled down by the Duchess of Cleveland, to whom Charles II gave it. Evelyn notes in 1666 that the avenue of "fair elms" was still there, "but the rest of these goodly trees, both of this and of Worcester Park adjoining, were felled by those destructive and avaricious rebels in the late war, which defaced one of the stateliest seats His Majesty had."

So filled with strange birds and waterfowl was St. James's Park, as well as with deer and antelopes and other animals, that it must have been almost an equivalent to a zoological garden in those days. It included the ground now occupied by Marlborough House and Carlton House Terrace, as well as the present long dreary stretch of the Mall and Spring Gardens.

Hampton Court Evelyn visited in 1662 before George London, under the influence of Le Nôtre, had laid out the great semi-circle parterre and avenues, and had made it the one glorious public garden of which we can still justly boast. Evelyn saw the possibilities. "All these gardens," he wrote, "might

be exceedingly improved as being too narrow for such a palace." "Too narrow" means that he saw the large proportions which were needed. On this visit most of his attention was devoted to the treasures of the interior of the palace. But at a later date he expresses his admiration more fully:

"for all that can be desirable of magnificence, Hampton Court, truly great, in a most beautiful flat; the palace, gardens, canal, walks, groves and parks; the sweet and silent Thames gliding her silver streams to the triumphal Winsorian\* *Tempe* raising its stately head and which alone has in view an hemisphere, as far as eyes and telescopes can distinguish earth from heaven: Thus from the keep the terrace, parks and forests, equalling, nay exceeding anything Europe can boast of."

In the case of Althorp the house and even the beautiful garden take up less of his attention than the lady (Lady Sunderland) who governs it all.† The Wilton garden he describes as "heretofore esteemed the noblest in England." It had been laid out by Isaac de Caux, the German architect, early in the century. Its situation on the riverside and near to the downs, and its lovely surroundings, especially appealed to him. He would have approved of the Palladian Bridge, which was not built till the eighteenth century.

At Euston, Lord Arlington's house in Suffolk,

\*"Winsonian" in the edition of *Sylva*. Obviously a misprint, as he is referring to Windsor, although he makes the Thames flow the wrong way.

†See page

Evelyn stayed several times, and seems to have had some hand in arranging the garden ornaments. In the elaborate description he gives of the house\* and garden in 1677 he writes: "It is seated in a bottom between two graceful swellings the main building being now in the figure of a Greek  $\pi$  with four pavilions, two at each corner and a break in the front railed and balustered at the top where I caused jars to be placed full of earth to keep them steady upon their pedestals between the statues which make as good a show as if they were of stone." He further describes the orange garden, the canal, the corn-mill, the avenues and the immense deer park. He was greatly impressed by the stately and lavish magnificence in which his friend the Lord Chamberlain lived with his hundred domestic servants. Horace Walpole in his day was not impressed. "The house is large and bad," he wrote; "it was built by Lord Arlington and stands as all old houses do for convenience of water and shelter, in a hole; so it neither sees nor is seen."

The garden at Cliveden, Evelyn says, "answers the most poetical description that can be made of solitude, precipice, prospect or whatever can contribute to a thing so very like their imaginations." But he did not like the surroundings, and when he went on to Windsor that evening, he told the King "without flattery" that he preferred "the prospect and park" of Windsor, "which is without compare."

The Earl of Essex invited Evelyn to Cassiobury, in

\*Afterwards the seat of the Duke of Grafton; burnt down in 1902.

Hertfordshire, in 1680, and as they walked and rode about they contrived alterations. The house\* had only lately been built, and no doubt Evelyn's advice was taken. It was at a later date that the garden was laid out anew by Kent, who began to destroy formality and introduce rather ruthlessly the landscape ideas. After describing the house, Evelyn shows his critical faculty and his technical knowledge of soils and aspects:

"No man has been more industrious than this noble lord in planting about his seat, adorned with walks, ponds, and other rural elegancies; but the soil is stony churlish and uneven, nor is the water near enough to the house, though a very swift and clear stream runs within a flight-shot from it in the valley, which may fitly be called Coldbrook, it being indeed excessive cold, yet producing fair trouts. It is a pity the house was not situated to more advantage . . . the land about it is exceedingly addicted to wood but the coldness of the place hinders the growth."

His description of Swallowfield, where he stays on the invitation of Lady Clarendon, is one of the best because it seemed to contain all that charmed him most:

"my lady being so extraordinarily skilled in the flowery part and my lord in diligence of planting; so that I have hardly seen a seat which shows more tokens of it than what is to be found here, not only in the delicious and rarest fruits of a garden, but in those innumerable timber trees in the ground

\*Pulled down in 1800 for a Gothic mansion erected by James Wyatt.

about the seat, to the greatest ornament and benefit of the place. There is one orchard of 1,000 golden, and other cider pippins; walks and groves of elms, limes, oaks and other trees. The garden is so beset with all manner of sweet shrubs, that it perfumes the air. The distribution also of the quarters, walks, and parterres, is excellent. The nurseries, kitchen-garden full of the most desirable plants; two very noble orangeries well furnished; but, above all, the canal and fish ponds, the one fed with a white, the other with a black running water, fed by a quick and swift river, so well and plentifully stored with fish, that for pike, carp, bream, and tench, I never saw anything approaching it. We had at every meal carp and pike, of a size fit for the table of a prince, and what added to the delight was, to see the hundreds taken by the drag, out of which, the cook standing by, we pointed out what we had most mind to, and had carp that would have been worth at London twenty shillings a piece. The waters are flagged about with *Calamus aromaticus*, with which my lady has hung a closet, that retains the smell very perfectly. There is also a certain sweet willow and other exotics; also a very fine bowling green, meadow, pasture, and wood: in a word, all that can render a country seat delightful. There is, besides, a well-furnished library in the house."

In his seventy-ninth year Evelyn was still travelling about visiting gardens, and he is specially delighted to find the garden at Marden (belonging to his cousin, Sir John Evelyn, of Godstone), which he had known in a "naked and barren condition," abounding in beautiful trees which had come to their natural growth.

Evelyn bridged the transition from the formal to the landscape garden. The stiff artificiality of the Tudor garden became mitigated in the still formal but magnificent designs and perspectives of the French school, and the smaller Dutch characteristics of clipped trees. The reaction then began in favour of landscape gardening. This was carried to excess by Kent, who broke up every straight line and created such havoc with the old formations that a Frenchman of the period declared that in order to design an English or natural garden all that was required was to intoxicate your gardener and follow in his footsteps. The artificiality against which the reaction set in included of course the clipping of trees, which had been done to excess. Pope ridiculed it in his amusing "Catalogue of Greens," which began:

"Adam and Eve in Yew. Adam a little shattered by the fall of the Tree of Knowledge in the great storm; Eve and serpent very flourishing.

The Tower of Babel, not yet finished, St. George in Box; his arms scarce long enough but will be in condition to stick the dragon next April.

A green dragon of the same with a tail of ground ivy for the present . . ."

With the experience he gained by visiting a very large number of gardens at home and abroad, Evelyn combined a sound and scientific knowledge of culture. But what places him in the front rank is his very sure sense of proportion—the relative size and value of different parts of a garden. He certainly liked garden ornament, but he knew how it should

be judiciously arranged; he knew the most favourable position for an orchard; he saw how the formal should be combined with the natural. This came from his love of trees, not merely as garden ornaments, but for their own natural beauty and magnificence. His knowledge of the planting, tending and propagating of trees was probably more extensive than that of any of his contemporaries, not excluding the great gardeners of the day. It is only natural, therefore, that his chief work in the realm of letters should be concerned with trees.

*Sylva* (or a Discourse of Forest Trees) was first published in 1664. Two further editions were published during Evelyn's life-time, in 1670 and 1679, and seven other editions at later dates. In a letter to Dr. Beale he tells how he had been pressed to bring out a third edition, and adds: "I am very vexed that it is proving so popular as in so few years to pass so many impressions and (as I hear) gratify the avaricious printer with some hundreds of pounds, there had not been some course taken in it for the benefit of our Society. It is apparent that near £500 has been already gotten by it; but we are not yet economists."

The origin of the book Evelyn describes in a letter to Lady Sunderland, written from Sayes Court on 4th August, 1690:

"When many years ago I came from rambling abroad, observed a little there, and a great deal more since I came home than gave me much satisfaction, and (as events have proved) scarce worth one's

pursuit, I cast about how I should employ the time, which hangs on most young men's hands, to the best advantage; and when books and severer studies grew tedious, and other impertinence would be pressing, by what innocent diversions I might sometime relieve myself without compliance to recreations I took no felicity in, because they did not contribute to any improvement of the mind. This set me upon planting of trees, and brought forth my *Sylva*, which book, infinitely beyond my expectation, is now also calling for a fourth impression, and has been the occasion of propagating many millions of useful timber trees throughout this nation, as I may justify (without immodesty) from the many letters of acknowledgment received from gentlemen of the first quality, and others altogether strangers to me. His late Majesty, Charles the Second, was sometimes graciously pleased to take notice of it to me, and that I had by that book alone incited a world of planters to repair their broken estates and woods, which the greedy rebels had wasted and made such havoc of. . . .

Thus, Madam, I endeavoured to do my countrymen some little service, in as natural an order as I could for the improving and adorning their estates and dwellings, and, if possible, make them in love with these useful and innocent pleasures, in exchange of a wasteful and ignoble sloth which, I had observed, had so universally corrupted an ingenuous education."

*Sylva* is admirably planned. From beginning to end it is strictly to the point; and although there are historical references, it is free from the digressions into side-issues of which the author was so fond in some of his other writings. The mention, to which he

returns more than once, of the "fuliginous clouds of smoke and soot," and "the hellish volcanoes" of London, of which he had written in *Fumifugium*, is very much to the point when he is speaking of the need of light and fresh air for the growth of trees and of beautiful plantations round a city. After preliminary chapters on soil, sowing and transplanting, he takes trees one after another in turn, and describes their origin, their various species, their growth, their age, the soil they prefer, the attention they need, their habit, the season for felling them, their timber and all the uses it can be put to, their bark, their sap, their medical virtues and their infirmities. This occupies two books. In the third he deals with coppices, pruning, the age and stature of trees, giving a full account of experiments with regard to the strength and power of resistance of various forms of timber, and lists of the finest plantations, and Laws for the Preservation and Improvement of Woods and Forests. The last book is devoted to "an historical account of the sacredness and use of standing groves."

It is difficult to quote from this book because Evelyn creates in it an atmosphere which can only be felt by consecutive reading. He indulges in no flights of rhetoric. He just tells you what he knows, not only from observation and study, but from practical experience. You are in the wood with him and listen to him while he explains why some trees are fine and others stunted, why one timber is strong and another brittle, why you must plant in a

certain season and fell in a certain season. Nothing is taken for granted, and no detail omitted. The obvious and the elementary, which are so often neglected, are given the importance they deserve. There is nothing, for instance, new in the following, but how well it is put:

“What can a strong plough, a winter mellowing and summer heats, incorporated with the pregnant turf or a slight assistance of lime, loam, sand, rotten compost, discreetly mixed (as the case may require) perform even in the most unnatural and obstinate soil?”

Nor is the trivial omitted: “Whenever you sow, if you prevent not the little field mouse he will be sure to have the better share.”

The expert arboriculturist would surely not take exception to any of the advice given by Evelyn, although he might pass over the medicinal properties which the author attributes to trees. In the chapter on the oak, for instance (twice as long as that devoted to any other tree), he would heartily endorse Evelyn’s caution about the transplanting which he warmly advocates: “Be circumspect never to inter your stem deeper than you found it standing; for profound burying very frequently destroys a tree, though an error seldom observed.”

He has his favourites among trees, founding his judgment not so much on appearance as on reliability. He admits that chestnuts in avenues are a “magnificent and royal ornament.” But “otherwise I cannot

celebrate the tree for its sincerity, it being found that contrary to the oak it will make a fair show outwardly when 'tis all decayed and rotten within."

The birch he regards as "despicable," although he has a great deal to say about its peculiar properties and uses; "of the whitest part of the old wood," he relates, "found commonly in doating birches is made the grounds of our effeminate *poudré* gallants sweet powder," and he devotes pages to the peculiar uses of the sap or water which can be extracted and collected from a slit made in the bark. When elaborating its astonishing medicinal properties he draws himself up: "But quacking is not my trade; I speak only here as a plain husbandman and a simple forester, out of the limits whereof, I hope I have not unpardonably transgressed: Pan was a physician and he (you know) was president of the woods."

The elder is both "despicable and vulgar," but the cedar is "noble," and should "thrive in old England," as elsewhere, if proper attention were given to it. To the pine he of course devotes many pages. Interesting information is given about its uses. We learn that in Moscow and Constantinople the streets were paved with pine, "the bodies of the trees lying prostrate, one by one in the manner of a raft." The ilex he had himself grown very successfully, and he mentions a fine specimen which grew formerly in His Majesty's privy garden at Whitehall, "and there was lately a sickly imp of it remaining." Under "hornbeam" he notices the "admirable" hedges at Hampton Court. "These hedges are tonsile, but where they are

maintained to fifteen or twenty feet height . . . they are to be kept in order with a scythe of four foot long, and very little falcated, that is, fixed in a long sneed or straight handle and does wonderfully expedite the trimming."

As to the yew hedge he claims to have been the first "which brought it into fashion," and maintains that for beauty and for "stiff defence to any plant" it is unrivalled. Holly reminds him of his garden at Sayes Court.

"Is there under heaven a more glorious and refreshing object of the kind than an impregnable hedge of about four hundred foot in length, nine foot high and five in diameter; which I can show in my now ruined gardens at Sayes Court (thanks to the Tsar of Muscovy) at any time of the year, glittering with its armed and varnished leaves? The taller standards at orderly distances blushing with their natural coral: It mocks at the rudest assaults of the weather, beasts, or hedgebreakers, *Et illum nemo impune lacessit.*"

So, perhaps, Peter the Great, the famous hedge-breaker, did not do so much damage to the holly as is generally supposed.

Evelyn has a strong word of reproach against unskilful woodmen, who go "armed with short hand-bills, hacking and chopping off all that comes in their way; by which our trees are made full of knots, stubs, boils, cankers and deformed bunches to their utter destruction: good husbands should be ashamed of it." He asserts that it is not "unpossible to reform

any tree of what kind soever." On the vexed question of the age of trees he has much to say. Some might think he exaggerates the age of fruit trees. The pear tree near Ross which was eighteen foot in circumference he says "must needs have been of very long standing and age tho', perhaps, not so near Methusalem's." He quotes Pliny on this subject and other authorities who were perhaps not very reliable.

Of charcoal-burning, an industry now unfortunately withdrawn from the woods, he gives a very full description. He calls it "the mystery of charing." Like Drayton before him, who in his *Poly-Olbion* makes the wood say:

"When under public good base private gain  
takes hold  
And we, poor woeful woods, to ruin lastly  
sold,"

Evelyn deplores the devastation and "prodigious waste" caused by the voracious iron mills and glass works, especially in Sussex, in "the ancient Andradswald, of old an entire wood, of which there remains now little or no sign." He enumerates in lists "the sweet and delectable country seats and villas of the nobles" whose gardens, avenues, parks, forests, groves, woods, plantations and other "most charming and delightful recesses" may be found; and he declares that "most of all that catalogue above-named have their parks full of good timber trees industriously improved by the owners, since the spoil of the late usurpers and sequestrators."

But there was much to be done, and his object is to rouse the nation to the need of growing and using their own timber, especially in shipbuilding. "Let us arise then and plant and not give it over till we have repaired the havoc our barbarous enemies have made . . . I speak to encourage and animate a work so glorious and necessary."

The advice Evelyn gives in *Sylva* is sound. In this book his style is at its best; the language of the gardener and the woodman suits him. He refers to his late brother Richard as "since transplanted to a better world." His anecdotes, even when they deal with superstitions, are delightful. There is one where he tells of the fate of the two men who not only cut away the mistletoe from an ancient oak at Norwood, but felled the tree itself. "The first soon lost his eye, and the other brake his leg; as if the Hamadryads had revenged the indignity."

The illustrations he quotes are interesting, the pictures he sketches are charming, and the appeal he made was needed and, indeed, is needed still now, when, if not for shipbuilding, for house-building, fencing and paving, large quantities of timber are required.

There is a close resemblance in Evelyn's enthusiasm for and love of finely-grown trees, and the same enthusiasm shown more than a hundred years later by Cobbett, who has already been quoted on Evelyn's design at Albury. In his *Rural Rides* William Cobbett was observing the state of agriculture in general, though often branching off, it is true, into

digressions of violent political invective. But frequently does he observe and expatiate on woods and coppices and the growth and culture of trees. His remarks about oaks, beech, hazel and yew, and his beautiful description of the seasons passing over the coppices remind one constantly of Evelyn's *Sylva*. No comparison need be made between the two men, either in character, career or outlook. But this they had in common, that the woods stirred them not merely with mild æsthetic appreciation, but with a desire, born of knowledge and experience, that special attention should be given to the culture of "those stupendous works of nature"; and, with the author of *Sylva*, Cobbett found himself "even rapt and transported."

The third edition of *Sylva* was prefaced by a dedicatory letter to Charles II, in which the writer says: "whilst you are thus solicitous of the public good, we pursue your Majesty's Great Example, and by cultivating our decaying woods contribute to your Power as to your greatest Wealth and Safety." This is followed by a letter "To the Reader," in which there is a significant passage where he warns people not to commit themselves so easily "to the Dictates of their ignorant Hireds and servants." He quotes Socrates as saying that it was far easier to make than to find a good husbandman.

This letter also contains a vindication and eulogy of the Royal Society. Following this there are two short Latin poems by J. Beale and R. Bohun. Finally he inserted the poem by his garden-loving

friend, Abraham Cowley (the first verses of which are quoted elsewhere).<sup>\*</sup> No greater enthusiast for nature could he have found among his friends. "God the first Garden made and the first City Cain," says Cowley. At the end of the book was inserted young Evelyn's translation of *Renatus Rapinus*.

There is a good deal to be said about the influence exercised by the publication of *Sylva* on British arboriculture, even after the enormous stimulus it gave to planting in Evelyn's lifetime. Dr. A Hunter, of York, was responsible for issuing further editions, the last of which appeared in 1813. This inspired an article in the *Quarterly Review*, which gave an impetus to planting. Sir Walter Scott was among the advocates, and one of his characters, the Laird o' Dumbiedykes, says to his son: "Jock, when ye hae naething else to do, ye may be aye sticking in a tree; it will be growing, Jock, when ye're sleeping!" The importance of a good supply of timber for ship-building could not be exaggerated before the days when metal took its place.

In the fourth edition Evelyn writes in his *Epistle Dedicatory to the King*: "I need not acquaint Your Majesty how many millions of timber-trees, besides infinite others, have been propagated and planted throughout your vast dominions at the instigation, and by the sole directions of this work." The *Quarterly* article at the beginning of the nineteenth century gave a splendid eulogy of Evelyn, declaring *Sylva* to be "a national work." "It sounded the

<sup>\*</sup>See pages 51-52.

trumpet of alarm to the nation on the condition of these woods and forests." Another *Quarterly* article in 1818 gave a good estimate of Evelyn's work which must be quoted:

"The greater part of the woods which were raised in consequence of Evelyn's writings have been cut down: the oaks have borne the British flag to seas and countries which were undiscovered when they were planted, and generation after generation have been confined in the elms. The trees of his age which may yet be standing are verging fast towards their decay and dissolution: but his name is fresh in the land and his reputation, like the trees of an Indian Paradise, exists and will continue to exist in full strength and beauty uninjured by the course of time. . . . No change of fashion, no alteration of taste, no revolutions of science have impaired or can impair his celebrity."

Yet again in 1838, in a *Quarterly* article on London's *Trees and Shrubs*, the author of *Sylva*, "the good and peaceful John Evelyn," is referred to with the warmest praise. The last reprint of *Sylva* was published in 1908 with an essay by J. Nisbet.

Evelyn having given the copyright of his book to the Royal Society's printer, gained no pecuniary advantage from it at all. This fits in with his dislike of popularity, of renown and publicity. It was sufficient for him that he attained his object, and he lived long enough to learn of the great success of his work both as a book and as an influence.

*Sylva*, with its romantic charm, wise advice, and

careful instructions, makes one regret that the great work he planned on the subject of gardening—of which he had an equally full knowledge—was never written, although fragments of it are there to delight us.

## CHAPTER XI

### LAST YEARS AT WOTTON

EXPRESSIONS of Evelyn's deep devotion to his home at Wotton occur time after time throughout his Diary. It was the place of his birth, and he was drawn to it again and again before he finally settled down there towards the end of his life. In the opening summary of his Memoirs, he describes it in glowing colours. After referring to its excellent situation, he continues:

"The house is large and ancient, suitable to those hospitable times, and so sweetly environed with those delicious streams and venerable woods, as in the judgment of strangers as well as Englishmen it may be compared to one of the most pleasant seats in the nation, and most tempting for a great person and a wanton purse to render it conspicuous. It has rising grounds, meadow, woods and water in abundance. . . . I will say nothing of the air, because the pre-eminence is universally given to Surrey, the soil being dry and sandy; but I should speak much of the gardens, fountains and groves that adorn it, were they not as generally known to be amongst the most natural, and (till this later and universal luxury of the whole nation, since abounding in such expenses) the most magnificent that England afforded; and which indeed gave one of the first examples to that elegancy, since so much in vogue, and followed in

the managing of their waters and other elegancies of that nature."

Under the date March 22nd, 1652, he shows what interest he and his brother took in the development of the garden.

"I went with my brother Evelyn to Wotton, to give him what directions I was able about his garden, which he was now desirous to put into some form; but for which he was to remove a mountain overgrown with huge trees and thicket, with a moat within ten yards of the house. This my brother immediately attempted, and that without great cost, for more than a hundred yards south, by digging down the mountain, and flinging it into a rapid stream; it not only carried away the sand, etc., but filled up the moat, and levelled that noble area, where now the garden and fountain is. The first occasion of my brother making this alteration was my building the little retiring-place between the great wood eastward next the meadow, where, some time after my father's death, I made a triangular pond, or little stew, with an artificial rock, after my coming out of Flanders."

In a letter written to Aubrey, the historian of the county of Surrey, February 8th, 1675-6, he gives many particulars about Wotton and the surrounding district, including a word about the woods:

"That which I would observe to you from the wood is that where goodly oaks grew and were cut down by my grandfather almost a hundred years since are now altogether beech; and where my

brother has extirpated the beech there rises birch; under the beech spring up innumerable hollies, which growing thick and close together in one of the woods next the meadow, is a viretum all the year long, which is a very beautiful sight where the leaves of the taller trees are fallen."

During his lifetime there were storms which did much damage. In *Sylva* he records "of what was left my father (who was a great preserver of wood), there has been £3,000 worth of timber fallen by the axe and the fury of the late hurricane and storm: Now no more Wotton, stript and naked, and ashamed almost to own its name."

His very affectionate relations with his brother George, who lived at Wotton, made constant visits there easy and very pleasant for him. They were described by Dr. Thomas Triplet as "a pair royal of brothers not again to be found in the nation for loving one another and loving one another's friends." Mrs. Evelyn stayed at Wotton for the birth of her daughter Mary, in 1665, and she sheltered there during the plague while her husband still attended to his duties in and near London, and there were family gatherings from time to time. But nothing could better illustrate Evelyn's love of Wotton than the fact that when he left Sayes Court, the home he had made for himself for forty years, nowhere is there any expression of special regret. But there are passages expressing pleasure at moving to Wotton.

George Evelyn was now a widower for the second time; he had lost all his children except one daughter,

who was married. John's son John was in Ireland, his one remaining child Susanna was married, and George therefore proposed that the two old brothers and Mrs. John Evelyn and the young grandson John should live all together at Wotton. In a letter to Dr. Bohun, 18th January, 1696-7,\* John Evelyn mentions that his "then circumstances and times considered," made him embrace the kind offer of his brother, as well as his own "inclination to the place," where he was born. In this letter there is a fuller description of how he spent his days than he wrote at any period of his life in his memoirs.

"My grandson is so delighted in books that he professes a library is to him the greatest recreation, so I give him free scope here where I have near upon 22,000 [2,000] (with my brothers) and whither I would bring the rest had I any room which I have not, to my great regret, having here so little conversation with the learned unless it be when Mr. Wotton comes now and then to visit me, he being tutor to Mr. Finch's son at Albury but which he is now leaving to go to his living, that without books and the best wife and brother in the world I were to be pitied; but with these subsidiaries and the revising of some of my old impertinences to which I am adding a discourse I made on Medals, I pass some of my Attic nights, if I may be so vain as to name them, with the author of those Criticisms. For the rest I am planting an evergreen grove here to an old house ready to drop, the economy and hospitality of which my good old brother will not depart from but *more veterum* kept a Christmas in which we had

\**Diary and Correspondence*. H. B. Wheatley, vol. III, p. 136.

not fewer than 300 bumkins every holy day.

We have a very convenient apartment of five rooms together, besides a pretty closet, which we have furnished with the spoils of Sayes Court, and is the raree-show of the whole neighbourhood, and in truth we live easy as to all domestic cares. Wednesday and Saturday nights we call Lecture Nights, when my wife and myself take turns to read the packet of all the news sent constantly from London, which serves us for discourse till fresh news comes; and so you have the history of a very old man and his not young companion whose society I have enjoyed more to my satisfaction these three years here than in almost fifty before, but am now every day trussing up to be gone, I hope to a better place."

On the death of his son John, in 1699, Evelyn wrote in a letter to Ralph Thoresby:

"I was thinking now of returning into the country for altogether; but upon other considerations suspend that resolution as yet and am now removing my family to a more convenient house here in Dover Street, where I have the remainder of a lease and may hope for some better repose and accommodation, and to converse with my friends again."

In the same year his brother George died at the age of eighty-three. Of him he writes:

"He was religious, sober, and temperate, and of so hospitable a nature, that no family in the county maintained that ancient custom of keeping, as it were, open house the whole year in the same manner, or gave more noble or free entertainment to the

county on all occasions, so that his house was never free. There were sometimes twenty persons more than his family, and some that stayed there all the summer, to his no small expense; by this he gained the universal love of the county."

George's only surviving child, Lady Wyche, was his sole executrix. He was buried "with extraordinary solemnity rather as a nobleman than as a private gentleman."

John Evelyn now became owner of Wotton. In July, 1700, he gives an account to Pepys of how he occupied his time after he had settled down there more permanently, although he still retained his London house.

"You will now inquire what I do here? Why as the Patriarchs of old, I pass the day in the fields among horses and oxen, sheep and cows, bulls and sows *et cetera pecora campi*. We have I thank God finished our hay harvest prosperously. I am sewing of [draining] ponds, looking after my hinds, providing carriage and tackle against reaping time and sowing. . . . This without.

Now within doors. Never was any matron more busy than my wife, disposing of our plain country furniture for a naked old extravagant house suitable to our employments. She has a dairy and distaffs for *lac, linum et lanam* and is become a very Sabine. But can you thus hold out, will my friend say? Is Philosophy, Gr[esham] Coll[ege] and the example of Mr. Pepys and agreeable conversation at Yorke buildings quite forgotten and abandoned. No. No. . . . Know I have been ranging of no fewer than thirty large cases of books, destined for a

competent standing library during five or six days wholly destitute of my young coadjutor (his grandson) who upon some pretence of being much engaged in the Mathematics and desiring he may continue his course at Oxon till the beginning of August, I have wholly left it to him."

In 1700 we get a view of him through the eyes of another diarist, with whom he corresponded and received "many marks of esteem and repeated favours." Ralph Thoresby of Leeds was an antiquary and Fellow of the Royal Society. He kept a regular daily diary from the age of twenty in which he recorded the doings of a very active life. Unlike Evelyn he was given to introspection, and he occasionally indulged in orgies of repentance so that he goes to bed "with wet cheeks," and "rivers of tears issue from his eyes." Evelyn must have been in London (at the house in Dover Street which his son had occupied) when Thoresby paid the visit which he records in the following entry in 1701.

"The famous Mr. Evelyn, who has published a number of very rare books, was above measure civil and courteous, in showing me many drawings and paintings of his own and his lady's doing; one especially of enamel was surprisingly fine, and this ingenious lady told me the manner how she wrought it, but I was uneasy at his too great civility in leaving an untold heap of gold medals before me, etc. He afterwards carried me in his coach to his son Draper's at the Temple, and showed me many curious pieces of his ingenious daughter's performance, both very small in miniature, and as

large as the life in oil colours, equal it is thought to the greatest masters of the age. He gave me a specimen of some prospects he took in Italy, and etched upon the copper by his own hand."

Again Thoresby in a letter to Dr. Richardson (July 3rd, 1702) writes, "The famous old Mr. Evelyn is yet hearty; he has left two coins for me at Gresham College." At eighty-two Evelyn's energy was not yet relaxed.

Indeed, in these last years his accustomed activity continued. He was up in London dining with friends, he visited gardens, and he was still closely interested in the affairs of Greenwich Hospital, and he attended meetings of the Royal Society. In 1704 his son-in-law Draper succeeded him as Treasurer of the hospital. Susanna and Draper came with their children to stay at Wotton and made a large party with the twenty servants which the Evelyns kept.

The old man was specially devoted to his grandson John, who was to be his heir. He was the second son of the John who died in 1699, the same year in which Evelyn lost his brother George. The boy was then seventeen, and at Oxford. He had been educated at Eton; Evelyn had "carried" him there himself, and was very proud of being assured by Dr. Godolphin, the Provost, that "there had not been for twenty years a more pregnant youth in that place than my grandson." When young John developed smallpox at Balliol the grandfather's anxiety may well be imagined. But the Master, Dr. Mander, seems to have taken the utmost care of him, causing

"him to be brought and lodged in his own bed and bedchamber," and sending reports of him every day. His recovery was a great relief. When John was nineteen he was appointed a Commissioner of the Prizes with a salary of £500 a year, and soon after he was made Treasurer of the Stamp Duties with another £300 a year. Fortunate for him to have such a grandfather!

Some idea of the close attention Evelyn paid to the boy's education can be gathered from his correspondence with Pepys. After John had been three years up at Oxford, his grandfather wrote from London (December 10th, 1701):

"He is now near twenty years old as I am of eighty, and there are some polishings which I had rather he should learn here (and whilst I am here) than when in the country. By what I can judge he is naturally of a grave, serious temper, discreet without moroseness. Having already been entered in the Civil Law, I intend he shall mix with it the Municipal and acquaint himself well with our Constitution without which I find gentlemen signify little in their country."

And later (January 20th, 1703) he refers to the young man's expeditions in England, his knowledge of Italian and French, his intention to learn Spanish and his progress in Latin and Greek.

"He has time for his agrestic flute, in which (with his tutor Mr. Banister) they spend a morning's hour together. He is likewise Mr. Isak's scholar, and

goes to the fencing school while here; and (when in the country) takes as much pleasure with his hand-bill and his pruning knife about our ground and garden as I should do if I were able. Sometimes, if weather and neighbours invite, he hunts with them. . . . In sum, finding him so moderately and discreetly disposed (studious and mindful of his own improvement) I give him free liberty, and I bless God, have never yet found any indulgence prejudice him, having taken a sort of natural ply which I am persuaded will be lasting. 'Tis a great word when I assure you I never yet saw him in passion or do a fault for which he deserved reproof."

In a letter to William Wotton later in the same year, he speaks of young John's talents and writes: "I do not much encourage his poetry, in which he has yet a pretty vein; my desire being to make him an honest useful man, of which I have great hopes being so grave, steady and most virtuously inclined."

Just before his grandfather died in 1706, John married Anne, daughter of Edward Boscawen. In 1713 he was created a Baronet. For two years he was a member of Parliament and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Like his grandfather he lived till he was over eighty.

To his beloved grandson, Evelyn wrote in a notebook some words of advice which he entitled, *Memoires for my Grandson*.<sup>\*</sup> The leaves of the book show that the pages were neatly written at different times, even up to a few months before his death, when

<sup>\*</sup>First printed and published in 1926, with Preface and Notes by Geoffrey Keynes.

the writing becomes indistinct and difficult to read. There is something in these *Memoires* which is more natural, more intimate and more revealingly characteristic than any entry in the Diary or, indeed, any letter he wrote. In its detail it shows better than any other document what Mr. Geoffrey Keynes well describes as Evelyn's "admirable fussiness."

After preliminaries about his grandson's succession to the Wotton estates, Evelyn expresses his appreciation of him by saying he finds in him "good and laudable qualities and inclinations." He then recommends "an assiduous and constant course of Devotion," not only for himself and his family, but for his servants, suggesting that he may be able "to maintain a pious Chaplain." He must not entertain servants who are "swearers, quarrelsome, intemperate, lazy, unfaithful." They must be paid punctually every half year, with also "Rewards once a year as they may deserve by their diligence and behaviour." Gardening, groves and walks are among the first things to which care should be devoted, and the estate should be improved by storing it with "timber trees, oak, ash and elm, frequent copses which in few years will prove incredible Emolument and restore the name of *Wotton*, otherwise in danger to be lost and forgotten." The most detailed instructions are given about the proper keeping of every sort of tool. He enumerates all the agricultural implements, gardening tools, carpentering tools, stable requisites, arms and fishing-tackle. Armour should "be cleaned and furbished," as there is "no furniture more

becoming a Gentleman's Hall." Then comes a curious injunction: "A *Drum* is very necessary to give notice to your Neighbours upon any surprise by rogues, thieves or fire, and you should therefore never beat it but on such occasions, your Neighbours being made acquainted with the meaning of such an occasion." A third of his income must be set aside for repairs, sickness and charity, and he must be very careful in keeping his accounts. If a member of Parliament, the service should be discharged "without affectation and vainglory, popularity, or the being carried by a faction or to serve a party," and he should not purchase his election by "profusely entertaining the mob."

"Be not," he enjoins, "desirous of large Acquaintance and Familiars who will rob you of abundance of precious Time and are often unseasonably troublesome or presumptuous." Field sports should be indulged in with great moderation, and gaming should be avoided. "Chess for a sedentary and bowls for a more stirring exercise . . . are both laudable, noble and healthful." With regard to study and reading there is much advice, and a long list of pretty stiff books which should be digested. The library should be well stocked, "trifling books . . . weeded out," and an exact catalogue kept. All the necessary tools for binding should be at hand. Instruments such as compasses, rulers, globes, etc., should be kept cleaned and oiled, and all papers, surveys, deeds, accounts etc., carefully preserved in a special closet.

A further section is added which must have been

written within a few months of his death, as he refers to his grandson's marriage. He hopes his wife will not be lavish and importune him "for unnecessary equipage and superfluities." Here comes a touching reference to his own wife: "If she did in this imitate your grandmother's Example of which I have to my comfort had about sixty years' trial, you would be infinitely happy and find her an help so many ways beside as you may safely confide in her." There is a further word about living in London.

"There is one observation I have long since made about the great Inconveniency of spending too much time in London which, unless you have an office to support the charge (be you never so discreet) will be exceedingly expensive. It will alienate your wife and daughter from domestical things more necessary and virtuous, the whole Time spent in play, or plays, impertinent Visits, double changes of apparel, mode, Gossiping and for most part unaccountable vanity . . . what an Advantage is it to have your country Economy with a discreet and faithful wife, whom you will always find worthily employed and at home."

In the concluding paragraph he regrets that weakness, infirmities and want of leisure have prevented him from writing this *Enchiridion* "more legibly and in better method."

At the end of the book a few pages are devoted to "Promiscuous Advices," which are brief apothegms such as:

"Suspect everything that is too prosperous."

“Too much raillery diminishes respect.”

“Be at peace with all, nevertheless, have but one confidant of a thousand.”

This interesting little book shows not only the course which Evelyn desired his young grandson to follow, but the course he himself had followed throughout his life. A punctuality, orderliness, consideration and idealism which were of inestimable value to one who pursued a life of such incessant activity without any professional compulsion. The apparent triviality of some of the particulars only serves to show his wisdom in understanding that great endeavour may sometimes be hampered by the neglect of the smaller details of equipment.

Evelyn spent nearly £2,000 on repairs to the house at Wotton. His grandson built a new library which has disappeared, but another library was built about the middle of last century, where many unpublished manuscripts are still stored,\* amongst them *An Office composed for the pious use and exercise of Mrs. Mary Evelyn*, or book of *Private Devotions and Offices* and *Instructions Œconomique* to help her in her housekeeping, in addition to those already mentioned. The house and garden have naturally gone through many vicissitudes since Evelyn's day, and little remains of what he saw.†

The last entry in the Diary is dated February 3rd,

\* *John Evelyn as a Bibliophil* (London Bibliographical Society), by Geoffrey Keynes.

† Permission to view the house or garden has not been granted to the author.

1706, and consists of notes of a sermon. John Evelyn died in London on February 27th at the age of eighty-five. His wishes with regard to his burial were not carried out. There is a passage in *Sylva* where he enlarges on the appropriateness of gardens as burying grounds:

“there are none more fit to bury our dead in, than in our gardens and groves, or airy fields, *sub dio*; where our beds may be decked and carpeted with verdant and fragrant flowers, trees and perennial plants, the most natural and instructive hieroglyphics of our expected resurrection and immortality.”

And later more particularly he adds:

“The late elegant and accomplished Sir W. Temple, tho’ he laid not his whole body in this garden, deposited the better part of it (the heart) there; and if my executors will gratify me in what I have desired, I wish my corpse may be interred as I have bespoke them: not at all out of singularity or for want of a dormitory (of which there is an ample one annexed to the parish-church) but for other reasons, not here necessary to trouble the reader with; what I have said in general being sufficient: However, let them order it as they think fit so it be not in the church or chancel.”

In the dormitory or north aisle of Wotton Church his body rests. Structural alterations and changes have rendered this part of the church very much less attractive than it is pictured even in early nineteenth-

century prints. The darkness, the locked door, and the iron railings produce a dank and gloomy atmosphere very different from the sunshine, flowers and foliage which ought to have surrounded a mausoleum to this great lover of nature.

## CHAPTER XII

### EVELYN'S PLACE IN HISTORY

WITHOUT being a man of action, a politician, a literary light of great consequence, or an artist of renown, John Evelyn occupies a position in the age in which he lived which seems almost unique, and surely deserves closer attention and examination than it has yet received. He is an outstanding representative of a type which was rare in those days, and not too common to-day—the gentleman who combined, with a high standard of knowledge, both good taste and judgment. A gentleman of distinction and high principle, who explored the sciences, who appreciated the arts and set high value on the fruits of the mind, may have a better claim to be remembered than others whom circumstances alone have forced before the attention of the public.

Culture and enlightenment are not so widespread as to be without any significance. There have been periods when their level has been higher than at other times. There have been men and women who, without themselves being creative artists, learned scientists, original philosophers, or even accomplished executants have shown themselves possessed of the qualities of appreciation and devotion which are the chief means whereby the great legacies of the

mind, and of the spirit are spread and carried from one generation to the next.

The word culture has been much desecrated. It can hardly be used without a suggestion of pedantry or a suspicion of priggishness. Nevertheless, its real meaning, the training or discipline by which man's moral and intellectual nature is elevated, shows that it constitutes an indispensable element in the advance of civilisation. Even if we dispute the advance of civilisation, and feel in our moods of pessimism that there is as much down as up in the process of human development, nevertheless, development itself seems to involve a rise in human faculties, and that rise is due to culture and in its turn produces it.

By adding enlightenment, we introduce a more illusive element which leavens the whole, and prevents a possibly arid concentration of thought which culture alone might convey. Enlightenment reaches beyond the bounds of the merely æsthetic, scholastic or scientific. Its range comprehends the moral and the social and, indeed, all life. Consequently this extension of the horizon makes for a better sense of balance and proportion and produces a power of surveying life as a whole which is of inestimable value.

Enlightenment is not the same thing as culture by any means. A man may have culture without enlightenment, or he may have enlightenment without culture. A student of many degrees with a profundity of knowledge which properly places him

among expert authorities, may lack just the inspiring vision, the power of judgment, the sense of proportion and quality which would give his work ten times the value it has. For this lack, many a profound student works in a barren field indifferent, perhaps commendably indifferent, to results. On the other hand, you may find a man very poorly equipped from the point of view of intellectual cultivation yet able to turn to good account his unpractised faculties because of his accurate perceptions, his innate moral integrity and the broad perspective of his outlook. To put it briefly, culture is a matter of the mind, enlightenment of the spirit. This intellectual and this moral element combined in one character may not make a great man or an outstanding personality (some "great men" have neither the one nor the other), but they do make a person who has counted and probably counts still, even though his name may only be known from the inscription on his tombstone.

It may be asked what after all is the value of these refinements and these artistic sensibilities in the ultimate aims of our social structure confined as they are to so few? Where in fact do they come in? Is the enthusiastic appreciator of the works of creative genius a man who matters very much one way or the other? In a mechanical and utilitarian age, the answer might be too hastily given that these qualities and their possessors were of no account whatever. But if we aim at a society in which the higher development of human faculties throughout the

community is the objective, the love of beauty in all its forms, the recognition of artistic skill and the encouragement of the excellence of craftsmanship are indispensable factors. No one recognised this better than William Morris, who emphasised the connection between industrial slavery and the degradation of the arts, and cherished the ideal of a freedom which would allow art and beauty to enter into the lives of the people far more than is possible in a world dominated by commercialism. We therefore owe a debt of gratitude to those who have fostered talent, discovered genius and refused both in public and in private life to allow æsthetic considerations to be set aside as of no account. Moreover, we shall find merit in the character and outlook of people, whatever their status, who place a higher estimate on the fruits of the mind, and the creative spirit than on the mere acquisition of material well-being or the pursuit of worldly success.

Evelyn stands high in this class. While he has substantial claims to a place in the list of English writers, he was known primarily as "a virtuoso," a man whose knowledge and taste gave him a very wide range of interests. He typifies better than anyone else, culture and enlightenment in the Stuart epoch. He was born in the reign of James I, and died in the reign of Anne, so his life covers the greater part of the Stuart period.

A survey of what practically amounts to the seventeenth century from the point of view of culture could not be made without many subdivisions show-

ing the peaks and valleys, the disabilities and encouragements in succeeding generations or even decades. Political convulsions drove society from one extreme to the other and back again, and more or less precise divisions or epochs might be carved out of the century. But taking the period as a whole no charge of barrenness or futility can be brought against an age which produced Milton, Bunyan and Dryden. Poets, to mention only a few such as Donne, Lovelace, Herrick, Crashaw, Waller, Marvell, Vaughan or Cowley, cannot be dismissed as of no account. In Evelyn's lifetime, Hobbes wrote his *Leviathan*, Sir Thomas Browne his *Religio Medici*, Samuel Butler his *Hudibras*, John Locke his *Essay concerning the human understanding*, and congregations were listening with rapture to Jeremy Taylor. The Royal Society was founded under the inspiration of Robert Boyle and Robert Moray, who was described as its "soul." Sir Isaac Newton was revolutionising science; Sir Christopher Wren was giving a new distinction to English architecture; Grinling Gibbons reached a degree of perfection in his special art which has never since been challenged; under the inspiration of Van Dyck a series of English portrait painters emerged whose work is by no means negligible in the history of painting; and in music Henry Purcell, the pupil of Pelham Humphrey, was laying the foundations of a British school.

To say that the work of these men in most cases was little appreciated by many of their contemporaries, that they reaped little reward, worked for a mere

pittance and lived in indigence is only to repeat a charge which can be brought against almost any age which is slow to recognise the merit of its own children.

Nevertheless, the range of general culture was very restricted, not only positively but relatively. The population of England, it must be remembered, only reached four and a half millions after 1700. The number of people who bought books and read them must have been comparatively small. Reviews and criticism were hardly known, and the number of people who read Milton, quoted Herrick or studied Newton can have been no more than a few.

But the absence of a large educated public, while it may have deprived writers and poets of immediate applause and commendation, not to mention remuneration, had from the point of view of creative art a distinct advantage. There was no question of trying to please the public; there was no idea of adapting and lowering style and method to catch popular approval. While necessarily reflecting to some extent the spirit of the time, and goaded also into protest or praise by great public events, the poets and writers were more purely inspired by their own undisturbed creative genius than can for the most part be the case in modern conditions. This was less true of the drama, which reached a larger public. Restoration drama became notoriously coarsened and debased in the attempt to pander to the popular reaction against the rigid puritan censorship.

On the whole, therefore, culture and enlightenment, although their product was of a high level and

by no means meagre in amount, were cherished by a few select people—an aristocracy of letters, art and learning—a small aristocracy in which Evelyn stands out as a prominent figure.

John Evelyn lived through a highly dramatic period of his country's history, but the story of his life does not lend itself to dramatic treatment. Although in his life's story there are no heroic actions or public triumphs to be recorded, it may be for that very reason the more interesting. His concern was with thought, with moral values and with artistic and scientific accomplishment, rather than with political strife and military achievements, and there is amply sufficient material to give us, not only through his own pen, but in the verdict and impressions of his contemporaries, a good idea of the spirit of a seventeenth-century country gentleman of outstanding attainments whose counterpart it would be difficult to find in any other period.

A superficial likeness perhaps might be found on the grounds of similar interest in art and archæology, and detached observation of public affairs between John Evelyn and Horace Walpole. But beyond the similarity in the positions which each of them occupied in their close contact with the leading figures of their day, and their absorption in artistic pursuits, there is no likeness whatever in the characters of the two men. Although Walpole by his letters gives us far more entertainment than Evelyn does by his *Journal*, Walpole was a lighter weight; he had not the same erudition, and was certainly not

regarded in his day with the respect and confidence which was enjoyed by Evelyn, whose reputation was built up on more solid foundations. Walpole's attitude towards public affairs, although he was a member of Parliament for over twenty-five years, was that of an observer and recorder and gossip, and stands in contrast to Evelyn's zeal for public service, which was accompanied by modest self-effacement. Evelyn was intensely domestic, while Walpole was the complete bachelor. Walpole, judging by his letters, was probably very good company; Evelyn socially may quite likely have been a bore. Horace Walpole lived in times which were favourable to the development of his particular and peculiar talents, whereas Evelyn was combating the tendency of his age, or, at best, struggling to cultivate and encourage that scientific and artistic appreciation which was still a very tender growth.

Evelyn, had he been Walpole's contemporary, would certainly have been among his most constant correspondents. Walpole looking back showed his appreciation of Evelyn in a very marked degree when he wrote of him in his *Catalogue of Engravers* (1763):

"If Mr. Evelyn had not been an artist himself, as I think I can prove, I should yet have found it difficult to deny myself the pleasure of allotting him a place among the Arts he loved, promoted, patronized, and it would be but justice to inscribe his name with due panegyric in these records as I have once or twice taken the liberty to criticise him; but they are trifling blemishes compared with his amiable virtue

and beneficence; and it may be remarked that the worst I have said of him is that he knew more than he always communicated. It is no unwelcome satire to say that a man's intelligence and philosophy is inexhaustible. I mean not to write his Life . . . but I must observe that his life which was extended to eighty-six years was a course of enquiry, study, curiosity, instruction and benevolence.

The work of the Creator and the minute labours of his creatures were all objects of his pursuit. He unfolded the perfection of the one and assisted the imperfection of the other. He adored from examination; was a courtier that flattered only by informing his prince and by pointing out what was worthy for him to countenance; and really was the neighbour of the Gospel for there was no man that might not have been the better for him. Whoever peruses a list of his works will subscribe to my assertion."

This eloquent summary of Evelyn's qualities is interesting, not only as a proof of Walpole's admiration for him, but as showing that Evelyn's reputation did not die with him; it was not only on his contemporaries that he impressed his cultivated personality, but the succeeding generation had him still in mind. A further illustration can be found in the long article on Evelyn in Dr. John Campbell's *Biographia Britannica* published in 1750. He is referred to as "a great Philosopher, a worthy Patriot, a learned writer," and as a great master of "stile." Further the article says:

"Mr. Evelyn was not of that sort of men who are glad of a plausible excuse of retiring from Labour.

... on the contrary he considered his health and his abilities and above all his improved stock of knowledge from experience as talents entrusted to him by providence for the benefit of mankind; and he scorned in his old age to perform less diligently his duty, than, from a true principle of publick spirit he had done in his youth."

We must remember that these comments on Evelyn's accomplishments were founded on the reports of him handed down by those who knew him, and on his written works, and not on the Diary, which still remained locked up in the library at Wotton.

In his life's record, as we now know it, Evelyn appears in so many attractive lights that there is a temptation to adopt his own method of panegyric in writing about him, or to imitate the tone of some of the letters of his friends. We can see with Pepys that his eagerness may have made him appear conceited in his younger days, but we know from his written words that he was genuinely humble. We can imagine that he was over-busy and over-fussy socially, but when his pursuits are closely followed his energy can only be praised, even though it may not have always been well directed. We may think his knowledge, except in the case of gardens and trees, was after all restricted, yet clearly his advice was constantly sought by Kings, Archbishops, leaders of scientific thought, architects and many others, so that he stands out in a difficult age as a man of good judgment and integrity.

If some stronger criticism must be levelled against him to prevent his being raised on a pedestal as a paragon—but here again it is his own honesty in his letters and papers which allows us to do it—it would be to charge him with hampering and excessive caution.

He lived when one King lost his head and another his throne, when wars were incessant both civil and foreign, when the Church was attacked and almost crushed, when the violence of conflicting opinions and crude intolerance led frequently to disorder and cruel persecution, when morals were debased and licence reigned. Although of course a sunnier side of the picture could be presented with brighter colours, the fact remains that the years from the execution of Strafford to the triumphs of Marlborough cover an epoch filled with as many tragic events and strong impulses as any fifty years in English history. That men should have been stirred by passion and driven to excesses in such times, and that the loud call to action in attack or in defence should have found so wild a response is in no way surprising. The list is a long one of men who espoused one cause or another, and suffered for it, not so much in taking up arms as in adhering from deep convictions to opinions and beliefs which led them to the Tower or the scaffold.

Yet, Evelyn, not a philosopher living aloof withdrawn from the turmoil of public affairs, but a man of position and eminence, closely interested in the course of events, a convinced champion of the Church of England, an ardent Royalist, a courtier,

and in various minor ways a public servant, managed to steer a course which never brought him into serious trouble with any antagonist. His Church views were never proclaimed sufficiently strongly to bring him into conflict with the Puritans. Only a sentence of his writings declares that his royalist allegiance caused him to be "severely threatened" by "the rebels"; and he even received at Sayes Court in 1656 Lord Lisle and Sir Charles Puseley, "two members of the Usurper's Council." His Protestantism, however strong, never brought him into open trouble with the Catholics, nor made him avoid the Court of James II. As one of the Commissioners of the Privy Seal under James II he merely absented himself on occasions in order to avoid active participation in illegal concessions to Catholics. His unquestionably high-minded morality never led him openly to censure the debaucheries of Charles II's Court, nor the treacherous intrigues of ministers.

No charge of personal cowardice can be brought against a man who stood at his post and continued his work amidst the hideous ravages of the plague; and, unlike the Sunderlands and Wallers, he never changed his coat in order to curry favour. Any comment indeed in this direction would be unnecessary had he insisted on pursuing his studies and avoided so far as possible all contact with the disturbances and upheavals in national life. While, not by compulsion, but by choice—hesitant choice, it is true—he was in the midst of it, yet he so managed to guide his barque between the rocks as to avoid

shipwreck or even collision. This may be attributed to his highly cautious nature, combined perhaps with a reluctance to make a fatal breach which would put an end to the routine of his busy life. Such excessive prudence might be mistaken for a lack of moral courage. But his life gave him much pleasure, and could still be pursued in detachment whatever monarch or Protector ruled, and whatever form of religion was imposed. He regarded his work, indeed, as worth doing, and worth while, publicly helpful and privately fruitful.

His personal loyalty was unquestionable. He never hesitated to visit his friends in prison or in distress. If his caution restrained him it was inspired by a certain diffidence bred of genuine humility. It was as if he thought himself ill-suited and ill-equipped to be a leader or a prominent figure in protest or attack; and he had the wisdom to recognise that ineffective sacrifice may only minister to personal vanity without accomplishing anything that signifies. In a single sentence, Evelyn was not a man of action. Any attempt to blame him therefore falls to the ground. Such a character may not appeal to those who prefer the rash impulse to the more guarded and deliberate decision. But he justified himself in the long run by his career of useful service. Had he been a truculent partisan it would have been in direct contradiction to the whole trend of his nature. Evelyn was not a snob, and Court sycophant, who hovered about Whitehall so as to be in touch with royalty. His friendship with Charles II was entirely due to the King's keen and

sympathetic appreciation of artistic, scientific and curious things. This throughout, as has been shown, was Evelyn's test. Neither moral nor political considerations weighed with him in the same degree. William III was the champion of Protestantism, and Queen Anne was the embodiment of the domestic virtues, but neither the one nor the other was personally or sympathetically interested in gardens or books or curios. Therefore, Evelyn was not much interested in them.

That Evelyn over-estimated the abilities and over-praised the qualities of some of his friends is apparent on several occasions. This arose partly from good nature, partly from a defective critical faculty so far as human beings were concerned, but also, it must be admitted, from a certain innocence of disposition which allowed him to be taken in. Nevertheless, he had a fine sense of quality and an eye for talent and, as in the case of Grinling Gibbons, he did not rest till it was recognised. Burnet wrote of him that he was "ready to contribute everything in his power to perfect other men's endeavours."

If a man or woman loved a garden, pursued a life of study or was interested in science or the arts, Evelyn's heart went out to them regardless of their shortcomings or even misdeeds. He was unwilling to step down into the arena of political controversy, and in religious matters, while his own faith was undisturbed, he exercised a wide tolerance in the case of other people's beliefs and practices. He was wise enough to know that by enlightenment and not

by violence can wrong ideas be made to perish. He had a tolerant rather than a sanguine disposition, a moral rather than a philosophic outlook. While he was charitable to a fault, no doubt ever entered his own mind that there was more lasting value in planting a wood than in storming a fortress, in planning a garden than proclaiming a policy, and in absorbing the wondrous beauties of nature and marvels of man's artistic ingenuity than in the ephemeral glamour of royal favour and political power.

When John Evelyn died, Mary Evelyn was seventy-one, and she was left alone. So vital a presence, so busy a companion, so exuberant a husband must by his death have left a blank that was deeply felt in the old house at Wotton and in his wife's heart. She outlived her husband nearly three years. In her will, written in the month of her death, February, 1708-9, she desired to be buried in a stone coffin near that "of my dear husband, whose love and friendship I was happy in fifty-eight years and nine months; but by God's providence left a disconsolate widow the 27th day of February, 1705 in the seventy-first year of my age. His care of my education was such as might become a father, a lover, a friend and husband; for instruction, tenderness, affection, and fidelity to the last moment of his life; which obligation I mention with a gratitude to his memory, ever dear to me; and I must not omit to own the sense I have of my parent's care and goodness, in placing me in such worthy hands."

This restrained tribute of wife to husband is eloquent of their close relations to one another. Sorrow and excitement they had shared together in an unusual degree. Sorrow at the loss in their home of eight out of nine of their children; excitement at the shocks and changes in the times in which they lived. Few could review such a long procession of friends and acquaintances, from Kings to gardeners; few in those days could have preserved amidst the lures and snares of conflicting and compelling attractions and the loud challenge of sects and parties and the onerous demands of importunate acquaintances that perfect understanding and mutual sympathy which cement true companionship.

Their domestic relations and the home they made evoked many expressions of admiration from their friends. There cannot be many who in their own day have been spoken of by their contemporaries as they were. Of Evelyn one wrote:\* "I have honoured your name, your character, your genius and your writings, and the solid and obstinate friendship you seem to me to have held with virtue and religion in the midst of a crooked and foolish generation."

Of Mary his wife another said:† "She was the delight of all conversations where she appeared, she was loved and admired, yet, never envied by any, not so much as by the women, who seldom allow the perfections of their own sex, lest they eclipse their own: but as this manifestly and upon all

\*Letter from James Quine, 1694.

†Dr. Bohun.

occasions was her temper, the world was very grateful to her upon that account."

John Evelyn can easily be surpassed in every branch of learning to which his lively attention was drawn. Mary Evelyn with her philosophic calm and kindly dignity has no claim to be classed among women of historical note. They were neither of them great in the generally accepted sense of the word. But perhaps they were greater than the great. Perhaps, by their ceaseless endeavour, their wonderful purity of motive, their quiet almost instinctive resolve never to debase their standard, their sustained effort to turn the passing hour to good account, and their constant preoccupation to help others, they may have set in motion those little currents of influence, hidden from the eyes of men, yet reaching further than mortal man can grasp, not only in their own day but to the years beyond.



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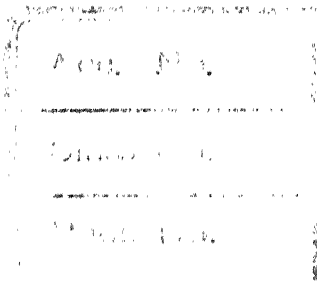
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